

19
18
17
16
15
14
13
12
11
10

ISSUE 3



Equality, Interviews
A Fad? Vegetarianism
Dance Floor Violence
What is Hare Krishna
Cro-Mags Cover Story

An Apology

Sometimes I act like a
know-it-all
Sometimes I'm 'just looking for
attention'
Sometimes I say stupid things
Sometimes I am just plain
dumb

Sometimes,
I fear your rejection
I long for your acceptance

Sometimes I pretend to be
righteous

These are my mistakes.
What else can I say?
I'm sorry.

I can only beg,
Despite my inadequacy
Please hear what I am saying
with an open mind.

Here are my purposes for doing the
Enquirer:

1. To discuss spiritual solutions to the individual and social problems of the modern world.
2. To encourage interest in spirituality among all people, regardless of age, sex, race, religion... regardless of anything.
3. In interviews, to provide people with a forum for spiritual topics which are not commonly discussed in most zines.
4. To give accurate information about the philosophy of Krishna consciousness.

Thanks to everyone who
helped out with the Enquirer;
Everyone who wrote me
letters; Mom & Dad & the
devotees of ISKCON San
Diego- for inspiration.

8	Rage
12	Shelter
14	Stambha's Corner
18	Do It!
19	Interviews
30	Inside out
33	Abortion
36	Zine Adeventures

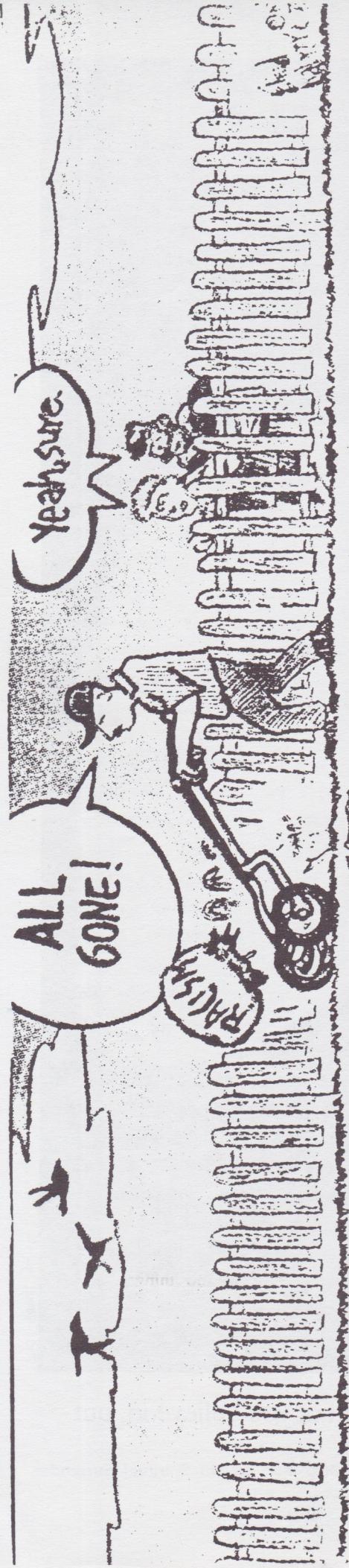
Sergio & Tim Amenity,
Mike Forced Down,
Madrid Against the Wall,
Ray Cappo,
Rob Farside,
Srila Prabhupada.

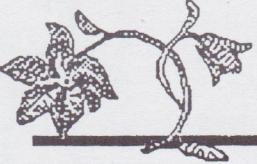


PIC: DANE SINE

"We've all got this thing inside called a soul. I don't know what all of you believe in, but I believe it, and I'm not going to give it up for anything."

-Zack Inside Out, intro to No Spiritual Surrender.





EQUALITY



"Doesn't it just burn you up inside that they could be so ignorant about the need for equal rights?" *Say no and I'll think you're nuts.*

"Well something's burning me. I don't think it's exactly 'equal rights' though."

I knew it, A nut. "What do you mean?"

"I don't know - all these liberation movements... they never do anything real..."

"...That's because there's too many people like Frank who wanna put us all back in the dark ages."

"Yeah, I guess. It just seems like they're not doing any good."

Well I... "What on earth do you mean by that?"

"They're all fighting against the right things, but..."

"But what?"

"They're all based on a materialistic view of personal identity. The seeds of prejudice, exploitation - all the things they're fighting against - are hidden right within their own philosophy... Remember the Unity Statement of the Women's Pentagon Action?: "We are made of blood, we are made of bone, we are made of... water." But we're NOT made of Blood, bone and water. We've talked about this so many times. Blood, bone, and water are just unconscious material elements and would hardly get up and march to the Pentagon to protest for their rights. Right? We are consciousness - we are aware of the blood, bone and water that makes up our body. Us conscious beings, we form liberation groups and march to Washington to demand our rights because *IT IS THE NATURE OF CONSCIOUSNESS TO SEEK FREEDOM.*"

"Yeah, I know all that, but if we're going to get anything done in the *real* world we need hard and fast practical laws to enforce equal rights."

"Oh, I agree completely. But if the mentality behind those laws doesn't change, then they aren't worth a damn. Without a change in the mentality it's all just ink in a book. But if you say, 'No. Just change the laws.' You won't accomplish anything. Am I right?"

"Maybe... I guess."

"The only real basis for equality is mutual respect for the sacred status of all life forms and all living beings, based on the fact that they're all emanations from God."

God? "What does God have to do with equality?"

"Equality is nothing without God! A fantasy, a failure. If

material nature, which creates the body, is not created by God, if there is no soul, then my manipulation and exploitation of you is nothing but a biophysical 'event,' ultimately meaningless. 'Morality' & 'justice' are then just the creation of self-righteous entities. The anger and indignation you feel at the hands of my tyranny are just mathematical expressions and neurochemical brain states. You're just a bag of chemicals, who cares if you don't like slavery. If you try to speak of equality without reference to the supreme consciousness you are doomed, it's absurd and hopeless. Why should I care about your 'feelings?' What feelings! You are just a combination of electrochemical impulses, you don't feel a thing when I whip you.

"The real suppression, the real tyranny is the tyranny of illusion, which keeps us down in the ignorance of material consciousness. But if we can just break free of this illusion - thinking that we're nothing but biological machines, thinking that our existence as conscious individuals is reducible to dead atoms and molecules. If we can smash out this big lie, then we can get free from the exploitative self-centered desires that constantly plague us. That's real liberation."

"I don't think so. I think we need to break up the social class system and throw down the hierarchy of the world so that every one can get an equal and honest share. If we have big rulers who control all the resources, then we can never have equality."

"You 'don't think so?' First spend some time thinking about it, then you can say 'I don't think so.' You're right though, if we have big exploiters, how can we have equality? But if we have lots of tiny exploiters, are we really any better off? No. Whether there is one big exploiter or billions of little ones, the result is the same - exploitation. *Those who are exploited should not struggle to become equal exploiters of the earth - to have a fair share of the ignorance.* Those who are oppressed, those who are downtrodden should try to free themselves of the real slavery - the urge to exploit people and things for bodily and mental gratification. As long as this germ-like urge remains, it'll grow and there will be unlimited exploitation and oppression. A liberated person sees, in reality, that every living entity is equal in a spiritual, real, sense; and that they are all worthy of respect and compassion."

"I still think it's the people in power who cause this

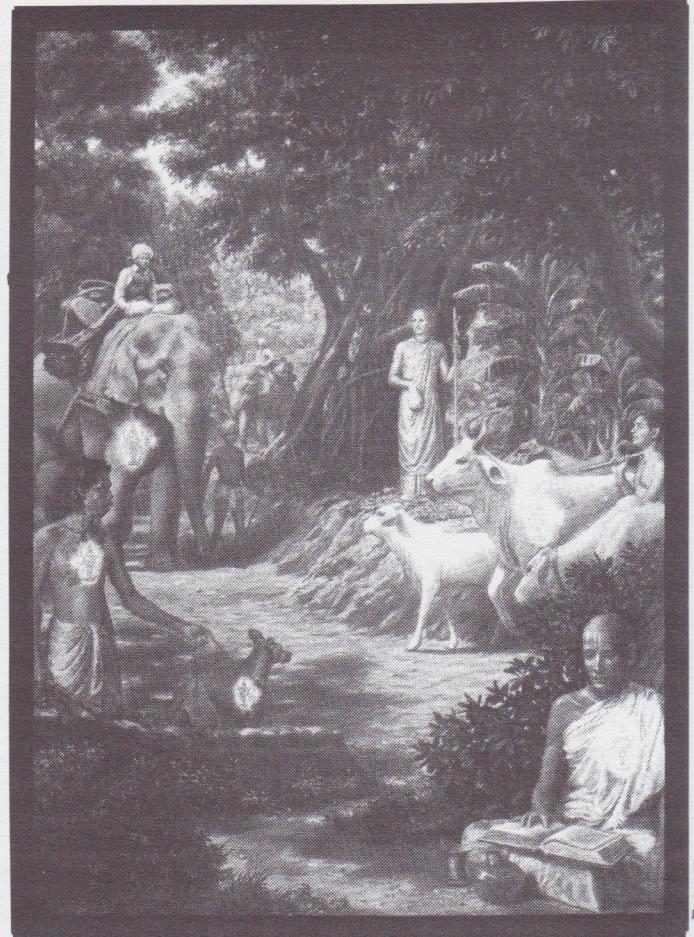
oppression of the masses."

"That's our scapegoat. 'it's the other guy.' It's us & you! If we can break out of this illusion, if we can get real liberation, then we can give relief. And as long as we don't, the system we hate so much will continue to prosper.

"But some of what you said is true. The rulers of society are ignorant men who falsely accept the material body as the self. Unfortunately many liberation movements accept all these same illusions, but they demand that the big exploiters of the earth should be replaced by the many little exploiters - exploitation should be open to all, on an equal basis. Now I don't know if they're aware of it or not, but they're nullifying the very basis of equality among all creatures, which is the recognition of the sanctity of all life forms. And as long as we sit back and let this go on unchecked, racism, sexism, exploitation and tyranny will prosper in all directions. We have to conquer the illusion of false identification with the material body. We have to try to realize the science of God and the nature of all things as emanations from Him. The moment we do, equality will come.

"The humble sages, by virtue of true knowledge, see with equal vision a learned and gentle brahmana, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a dog-eater."

-Krishna (Bhagavad-gita 5.18)



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About Equality

WHAT makes us equal anyway? I've always liked to believe that we are, but I could never figure out how. How are we equal? As a kid I'd look around, absolutely knowing that we were all equal, but everyone seemed so different. I sat next to a kid in fourth grade who could draw superheroes like you'd never seen before. I'm talkin' good. I couldn't draw

a stick figure. Were we still equal? Johnny was a basketball wiz. Donna was the smartest kid in the class. I just couldn't figure it out. Donna's the smartest... aren't we equal? But I had saturday morning cartoons to watch and baseball games to play, so there was no trouble letting these sticky questions quietly disappear in the background noise.

Unanswered questions may hide in the shadows for a while, even a very long while, but they come back to mess with your brain sure as anything. Right around now hardcore comes whistling along. Most people in my scene were pretty into the whole equality tag, and so there was no real need to discuss it, to question it. It was just accepted, people are equal. Why? Because. If you've never met a well read bigot, you're in for a shock. I was. I watched these people tear my flimsy sentimental ideas of equality to shreds. The scary thing was that they'd say some stuff that made sense. You didn't

want to admit it, but it sure did. They'd argue, "how can we all be equal? Are you equal to Einstein. Have you thought up any general relativity theories lately? Well?"

But I knew we were equal. I knew it! It was one of those gut feelings. I'd just known it since day one: everyone's equal. But how?

As high school drew to a close, somehow or another I wound up reading this far out book called *Sri Isopanishad: Discovering the Original Person*. And, after that, the *Bhagavad Gita As It Is*. I was psyched. Here's what I've gotten so far:

First of all: We are not these bodies. We're always talking about this all over this zine so I'll be very brief; the body is constantly changing. Where is the body you were born in? Where is the one you'll die in? But like I said, we always talk about this so on to the next point.

Thinking on a bodily level, we're all unequal. Thinking socially, thinking politically, thinking economically, even thinking in terms of different religions. But how important is this body? It's never the same. Cells are always dying and being replaced. The body is not very important. Today we decorate it with the

latest fashions and a new haircut; tomorrow it's food for the worms and vultures. But the consciousness within the body, that is actually us. Everything else is just a label. Man, woman, dog, cat, math genius, punk - labels. Every living thing has this spiritual spark, *IS* this spiritual spark. And the person who is in knowledge - who understands that the body is simply a covering - does not consider living entities based on their bodies. Such a person knows that everyone is actually the soul within the body and constantly experiences the true equality among all things. Such a person is extremely rare and understands that everyone is actually a particle of consciousness; and that all these particles are equal because they are all emanations from the Supreme Conscious Source.

Now we can defeat these bigots, scientifically, in open verbal combat. First we learn how to crush the idea that people are just bodies. We must ourselves fully understand this point, using all our intelligence and logic, then we smack them in the face with it: "You're not that body!" Immediately all their little "facts" are seen for what they really are: insignificant trivia. Learn it, fight. We can wipe out these racists and sexists, and we can even destroy all trans-species discrimination. Very easily, and very enjoyably. Just watch their faces drop!

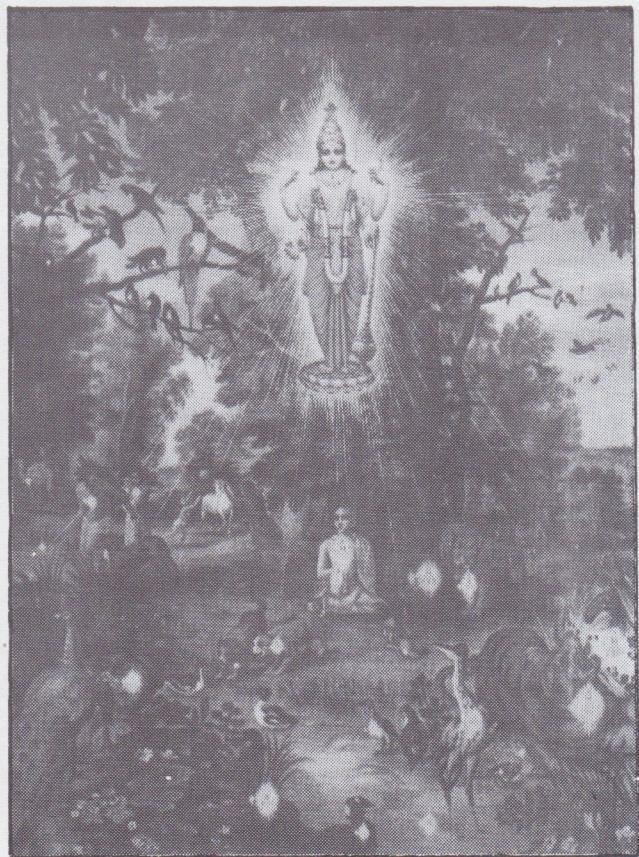


White Power Black Power:

What power? The power of your white/black skin? The same black/white skin that is eaten by insects and bugs every day? The same black/white skin that will yellow and rot in the grave, a feast for the worms? Is this the power you speak of? Or is the power from that white/black body? That body, getting old and smelly and rotted? Getting sick, getting tired? This is power you think you can brag about? What is this foolishness!? What is this "white power" rascal shouting about? "Black power," what is this nonsense!? Face it, that thing you're so damned proud of is on a race to the grave. It's made of dust and it's going back to dust. That pitiful miserable thing you march around in and punch people with is power-less! It must die! You can't stop it, where is your power? Why must your powerful proud white/black body die, just like a helpless rat? Actually, very soon all your "power" will be nothing more than dust in a mud puddle and ashes in the wind. No one will know about your powerful body. No one will know about your proud whiteness, your pure blackness. You will be completely lost, your pride destroyed. And we will laugh, as we are laughing now.

You want to talk about power. Talk about this. We are

particles of an energy which is not of this dead world. We are pure consciousness, the force of life itself! Here is the power you are shouting about. Here!! Come take it, it's already yours. We are anasina - indestructible. nainam chindanti sastrani / nainam dahati pavakah / na cainam kledayanty apo / na soshayati marutah. We can never be cut to pieces by any weapon, nor burned by fire, nor moistened by water, nor withered by the wind. We are unbreakable. This is something to be proud of. Not this pathetic "skin power." And see, we set ourselves apart from no one, everyone has this power. Take it. First realize you are soul, then speak of power. Until then you speak only foolish hatred and lies.



You've Come a Long Way, Baby

Yeah, right. Today I was in a gas station. One of those advertisements for Virginia Slims cigarettes plastered on the wall. Here's a woman with this big dumb smile on her face, wind blowing her skirt up and her legs spread open to the world. The caption reads, "you've come a long way, baby."

My question is: are people falling for this? Where has she come? From having her legs forced open in private, to having her legs forced open on a Santa Monica freeway billboard. Instead of being exploited privately, now she can be exploited by millions, in gas stations across the country. After all, she's come a long way.

But I see The Man's plan, and it scares the living daylights out of me. We've all heard of doctors who give their hypochondriac patients sugar pills to "cure" them. Virginia Slim is the biggest sugar pill I ever swallowed. The Man sees that we're ready to fight for our equality. He sees that we could explode at any moment, and overthrow his age old tyranny of exploitation. He sees the danger, and he knows just what to do.

As we march forward off our cliffs, let us stop to think, *have we* really come a long way? The Man is still exploiting us, and now more than ever. But he's very clever, and he soothes us by fooling us into thinking we're getting what we want. Hey, now we can smoke cancer and be raped on billboards just like everyone else - this must be equality.

And now more and more provisions are being made for our exploitation, baby. And because they're labeled with the tag "equal rights" we're all for them. I'm scared.

Equality won't come from The Man. We should stop dreaming. As long as The Man is on the throne, we'll be on the billboards.

We have to overcome The Man within ourselves. The Man is envy. The Man is greed. The Man is insatiable lust for sense gratification; pride, arrogance, conceit, anger, harshness and ignorance. We have to beat The Man down, until we can see our souls again. Then we will have equality. Then we will have come a long way.



Equality,
is a reality.
Look within
your self to
find the
unity you
seek.
Not along
the edge's.
Not in the
skin.
It's at the
core of your
existence,
untouched
within.
Find it.
Know it.
And share it
with the
world, cause
man we
gonna grow
in it.
Truth

Letters:

Send your thoughts via mailbox: 17763 Bellechase circle, San Diego, CA 92128. Here's an excerpt of a recent mail communication:

Hey-

...Thanx a lot for sending your zine!! I like it. Although I am not a Hare Krishna, but right now I call myself a Christian. I find a lot of the Krishna philosophy to be very interesting and truthful. A year and a half ago I would have called myself an agnostic but over the past six months especially I've come to realize that there must be a higher power and have begun to realize the spiritual nature within us all...

Hey-

Thanks for your letter and zine.

...The Hare Krishna movement is never meant to be another sectarian religious designation. I say this because you mentioned in your letter that you are not a Hare Krishna, you are a Christian. I don't see any conflict. There actually is no conflict. Krishna consciousness is called sanatan-dharma. Sanatan mean "eternal" and dharma is the inseparable quality of something. (Like the dharma of water is that it is liquid) So sanatan-dharma is the eternal function of the soul. If you take this function away from the soul, it is no longer the soul, get it?

What is this function? The inseparable quality of the living entity is to give service. The proof is that there is no one in existence who is not constantly giving service to someone. Wife serves husband, husband serves wife, parents serve children, etc... President of the United states serves citizens. There's no exception. The trick is that all these services are incomplete and unsatisfying as long as they are not linked up with the supreme object of service, who is God, Krishna, Jehovah, God.

That's it. That's what Hare Krishna is all about, reviving that eternal relationship with God. There is nothing sectarian. There is no contradiction either. There are devotees all over the world, in many different religions, Buddhism, Islam, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, there is no barrier. The main tenant of Krishna Consciousness is to love God with all your heart, mind, body and soul... this is certainly not contradictory to Christianity in any way. The main process is to take refuge in the Holy Names of God. Again, where is the difficulty? There is none. Don't you agree? If there is some bias towards taking shelter of the names Hare, Krishna and Rama, then Jehovah, Christ, etc... they will do also. Hare Krishna is chanted because Lord Sri Caitanya recommended these names specifically as being the most potent method of achieving unconditional pure love of God. Because they are very intimate names of God, describing Him in very intimate ways. But devotees also sometimes chant other names, so there is no impediment.

Actually Hare Krishna's accept Lord Jesus Christ as guru, and shaktivesh-avatara or "empowered representative" of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I also consider myself a Christian. Why not? I am trying to follow Jesus' teachings myself.

See, there are so many labels, so many costumes we can wear. Black, white, punk/skin, man/woman, Christian/Hindu. But actually the fact is that we are a spirit soul. And as spirit soul our natural activity is to give service to God without selfish motivation. So these labels, they really don't matter. Whether one is man or woman or Christian or whatever, the sanatan-dharma is the same: Give loving service to God. There are no barriers in Krishna Consciousness, it is open to everyone, regardless of race, caste, creed, color or sex.

Just to show that I'm not just talking some mumbo-jumbo philosophical rhetoric, The greatest devotee of the Holy Name, Haridas Thakur, was a muslim. There are many muslim devotees today. And even more interesting, a great devotee named Bir Krishna Swami now has students who are Christian monks, living in the monastery, chanting Hare Krishna and practicing Krishna consciousness. That's how rad they are.

I'm glad to hear that the past 6 months have been productive for you, and thanks for all the compliments on Enquirer...



Rage: TV's and mind monopolies. It's all the same to them. You? who are you in their eyes? A statistic? A customer? A machine? I've contracted their disease: drooling for fame, drooling for power. Rabid in the material world. Under their whip I consume and am consumed. Puppet like.

Consume/Consumed

Cannibalism. Consumerism. Obey the order of the television. I'm the consumer ...consumed. Conception of deception is my ultimate ruin. Greed controls my mind. Reality denied. Exploit/exploited by the lie, that I cry: "It is I it is mine It is I it is mine It is I it is mine It is I"

Skies they fill with darkness. Minds they fill with darkest. More oil for the oceans, more homeless for the streets. I lose. I become lost. I am absorbed in their angry power struggle. I am kept docile with promises of the impermanent.

The burning rage they fuel within. I am burned by it. I am bound in illusion. The web they have spun. The desire; The lust; which confines me. Which they have encouraged. By which they tighten the noose around my neck.



Buy and sell. I am human commodity. I am under deck, slave quarters, packed in and suffocating in their cities of hatred. I am crushed by their game. The sheer monotony. The deadline; break-neck pace. The madness catches in my throat.

Darkest Dark

Darkest darkness, it keeps me down in madness. Absorbed in the conceit of anger Bound by the impermanent.

Red rage of confusion; I'm tied to illusion. The web surrounds, and it tightens down around me. This network of desire: an unstoppable fire.

When will the light of truth force open my



FISHFET

eyes? When will the sword of knowledge cut through my lies?

I don't belong here. But where? I search. I look. In the mirror there is only a dead body. Whispering. Lies. "It's not so bad," he says. "You'll get used to it," he says. Lies.

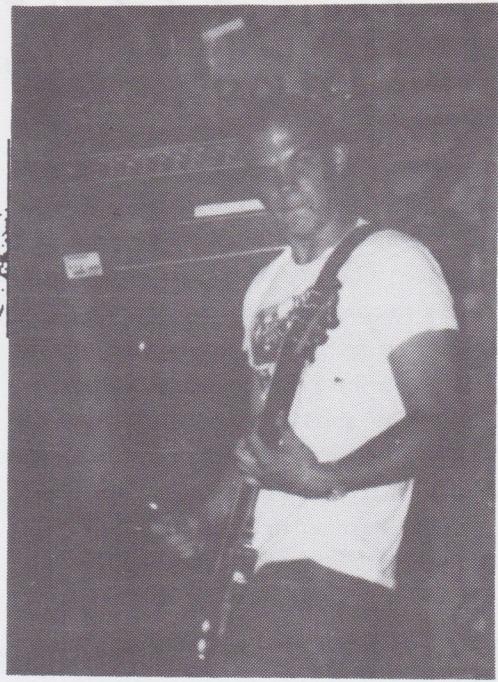
Lies

Searching in the mirror. See if I can see, Who am I? Lump of rotting flesh stares back. Tombstone eyes that whisper lies.

When will I realize? This rage will haunt me to the ends of the earth. There is no hiding place. When will I see the way back home? It is before me. I sense it. I am close. But at any second I could be swallowed. Pulled back on my leash of lies. Back into their furnace.

Maya

Illusion. Darkness. Leprous death breathing down our necks.



Hatred.
Fear.
Leprous
death
breathing
down our
necks.
Wrapped
around
our
throats.
All this
infection.
Cause we
keep on
accepting:
that which
is not.

Constant
frustration
leads to

angry retaliation. Our energy wasted chasing our own tails. Striking out at them, hitting ourselves.

'Rebelling' with the proper fashion. Supporting their lie with our efforts. Lashed to their command on chains bound through our rabid senses.

No more.

To destroy their materialist 'rebellions' and establishments. To break their strangling hold on our souls. To fight with knowledge, for the destruction of their babylonian tyranny.

To turn our rage against them, this band has come together. For endurance. For courage. For strength. For love. For compassion. We have come together to strengthen our determination. To struggle against all odds. To offer hope in dark times. To offer our selves...



Save the Cow

A program designed to protect cows from the abuses of a modern slaughterhouse civilization.

To continue keeping cows away from the butcher's block, to keep giving them a chance to live peacefully and happily, this program needs support. Any donation of time, money or resources is deeply appreciated.

Save-the-Cow members receive a monthly newsletter with articles on many diverse topics relevant to cow protection. Back issues are available for \$.50 each (\$.60 in Canada).

*Feb '89- Cow protection really protects society.

*Jan '90- Answer to a challenge- methane issue, future of cows if we all became vegetarian, is eating meat kind to the world?

*Feb '90- Mitigating the stress factor by simple living and high thinking.

*March '90- Veganism.

All program expenses and incomes are printed every month so everything is very up front.

By refusing to eat flesh we oppose the brutal meat industry. This is an excellent opportunity to go one step further and actively support a peaceful alternative. Please help this sincere program in any way you can. Inquiries are welcome.

Save the Cow, Rt. 2 Box 24, Alachua, Fla. 32615

THE RAZOR'S EDGE

The path of spiritual realization is very difficult; it is sharp like a razor's edge.

Issue 1: Sold Out

Issue 2: Y.O.T.

Issue 3: Cro-mags

\$1 an issue to Kalki dasa

c/o The Razor's Edge

P.O. Box 400271

Brooklyn, NY 11240-0271

SPIRITUAL LIFE: A Cop Out?

"Hey, you wanna buy this zine?"

"...Nah I don't want this. No offense, but religion is just a cop-out. You're just running away from your problems."

"Yeah. I have to agree with you there. It does seem like people get into a religion so they can hide from life. The fact is that 'religion' is a nothing more than a cop-out for 99% of the people who get into it; just another way to put blinders over their eyes. Actually, anything can be a cop out. And 99% of the people who get into anything are just trying to get so absorbed in it that they forget about the problems of the real world. Hardcore is a good example. Just about every hardcore kid I've ever met (including myself) uses hardcore as a diversion from the real world. We put up this big front that we're interested in solving this or that problem; and we put on our little benefits, and scream our little slogans, but what are most people really doing? Just busy finding the right stussy shorts, and looking for a pair of used docs. Just busy like anything with all our little gossip and soap operas. Make sure you make a real problem out of someone bumping you in the pit - this way you might be able to forget about your real problems for a second. That's what's going on - at least that's my personal experience."

"But if 99% of us are just trying to escape reality, still there is that 1% who aren't. And even if 100% of the straightedge kids were total yuppie morons, drinking would still be a waste. Right? And I don't think you would tell somebody to drink just because most of the straightedge kids are jerks. No. You'd say, 'don't drink, but don't be like these fools either.'

"So now religion. I totally agree that religion is full of nuts and crackpots and hypocrites and people who just want to run away from the hard facts of life. But spirituality is the most essential thing in human life. Human beings have the chance to think about concepts like physics and poetry and music and, ultimately, spirituality, God, and the meaning of existence. And you're right, in 99% of religion you never find these questions asked. Or if someone asks, they're handed some dictionary answer, patted on the back, and given a loli-pop. But this nonsense is not religion, this is cheating, this is organized cop-out. And it's worthless."

"But, like hardcore, if 99% of the stuff that gets called 'religion' is just an attempt to escape reality, still there is

that 1% that isn't - still there are those (in all different religions, all over the place) who are facing reality, boldly. And just because 99% of so-called religion is completely bogus, that doesn't affect the fact that we have to find out who we are, who God is, is there a God? What is my relationship to this God? Why am I here? ...And I wouldn't tell you not to ask these questions just because most of the stuff that gets passed off as religion is garbage. No. I say, 'ask! You have to ask! You have to figure it out, otherwise you'll continue suffering. But don't be like these fools either.'"

"Well it's alright to ask those questions, but when you get into organized religion, that's different."

"OK. Then ask! Ask! If your on some trip against organization - that's your own business. But don't cop-out. You still have to ask these questions. And I'm not talking about putting your hand on your chin, staring into space and saying 'Hmm, what is the meaning of life?' And after 5 minutes, 'Whoops! Time's up - gotta go watch Bugs Bunny.' No. We start really asking these questions when we start living the questions. When we start living our daily lives in a search to find these answers, then we're really asking. Otherwise, it's just a big bluff. So you have something against organization, OK, that's cool. But you're not off the hook. Now you must be true and ask. Does that sound reasonable to you?"

"Yeah. And I'll come up with my own answers. And if their not the ones you have in your religion, you'll say their wrong. You people always do that."

"us people?" ...OK you come up with your own answers, that's fine... Go get your answers... Do it!... Why aren't you? Why haven't you? Because you are a number one cop out also. You say, 'Oh, if I try to find these heavy answers, you people will just get on my case. That's why I don't do it, cause of you people. Not because I can't figure things out. Not because I'm afraid I might not like the answers I find. It's because of you. If you'd just go away, then I'd ask.' This is your nonsense cop out. Don't try to blame it on someone else. You're just too afraid to search for the answers to the real questions of life. And because you don't want to admit you're too afraid, you blame religion."

"What are you talking about!? You're the one who's coping out with all these rituals and stuff you do just to

convince yourself. You can't tell me my answers are right or wrong anyway!"

"Your answers? What answers!? You haven't even begun to look for these answers. You scratch your head once a week and pretend that you're some deep philosopher. Even if I wanted to judge, what answers do you have for me? Are you so afraid that I'm going to say your answer is wrong that you refuse to figure it out?"

"I have answers."

"What then? And is this the result of your great answers: You're suffering like anything, you hate your boss, you hate school, you don't want to take out the garbage... Is this the result of your great answers to the timeless questions of life? You're bluffing."

"Well, don't you have bad days? Don't you hate to take out the garbage?"

"Yes. But I don't say that I have the answers. I don't say that. I say that I'm trying to understand things. That's all. And that I am understanding things more and more, and that I'm having less and less bad days and less and less hate. That's what I'm saying. I'm not trying to pull one over on you. I'm not pretending to be some encyclopedia of answers. But I do have direction. I can tell you what I've found. And I am honest enough to accept that I will need help from other people, other sources. I'm not bluffing that I can figure out the universe on the strength of my tiny, biased brain. But I am saying that I have direction. That's all. You're saying something else. And you probably think that I'm saying something else, but I'm not.

"And before you go running around telling the world who is and who isn't coping out, first you have to stop coping out, then speak. As soon as you stop running away from the real problems of life - like the fact that you're suffering, like the fact that you're getting old and smelly and diseased, like the big fact that you're gonna die and everything you're so damn familiar with is gonna go bye-bye - when you stop running away from that; when you stop burying your head in the sand of the TV and your skateboard and your records; then you can talk about cop outs. Otherwise you're just cheating and bluffing."

"I accept that I'm gonna die, but I'm not gonna go around thinking about it all the time."

"Right, because if you thought about it you'd see how shallow your habits and hobbies are. The same goes for me, I'm not trying to damn you to hell or anything. I'm saying "you, you, you," but it's really "we." We don't want to think about it very much because if we did, we might have to change - and change is a scary thing. So we play the big cop out and say "I know I'm gonna die. I accept death." If we really understood that we're hanging on to life by a thread, a thread that could snap before I finish this sentence, if we realize that, then what then hell are we doing with our lives? If you knew that you were gonna die before midnight, is this what you'd be doing; calling people cop outs and running around a dance floor like a chicken without a head?

"Well?... Would you?... So who's really coping out more: a person who tries to understand that death is waiting on our every move, a person who tries to live that fact - or a person who simply puts on some 7" and tries to 'get into it'?"

"...Or the person who buries themselves in ritual and church and robes and little prayers and fantasies?"

"No. I'm not talking about that garbage. I don't want anything to do with that cheating religion. That is nonsense sentimentalism. That is just as much of a cop out as anything else - I agree with you. But what I'm talking about is true and honest spiritual life."

"Oh come on! You're just running away from your problems!"

"Alright OK, maybe I am. You're probably right. But that doesn't change the fact that you still have to stop your running - regardless of whether

or not I'm a cop out. And don't say you're not running away; screaming your red face off into a microphone. And don't say you're changing the world or making equality or something, because you know just as well as I do that these kids you're screaming to just wanna jump around and shoot their mouths off in between songs. We're trying to bury ourselves in this stuff. Don't get me wrong, hardcore is great. And there are 1 or 2 kids out of a million who are sincere. But we're trying to bury ourselves in it so we can forget the outside world. When we were little kids and there was something we couldn't handle, we could go play Robin Hood. Society says we're too old for that, so

(Continued on page 45)

Just because
99% of
So-called
religion is
completely
bogus, that
doesn't affect
the fact that
we have to
find out who
we are, why
am I here?

Turn it around

So proud of this modern society.
With all our brains what did we gain with our technology?

Better wars and cars and VCR's is what they're building for me.

But the world's not getting satisfied, it's building more greed.

And TV that's for me, our advanced communication;

Wasting my time, mind, and imagination.

Station to station,

Mind devastation,

Polluting our youth across the nation.

And this is what they're calling civilization;
Our leaders push us forward to annihilation.
Nation against nation, this is our creation.

Intoxicate, inebriate to keep from contemplation.
Doctors work on cures for diseases we've created
From cancer causing chemicals we dumped and then we ate it.

The birds and bees and trees are now becoming outdated.

'Cause modern man's advanced mind is too sophisticated.

So proud of our modern sexual liberation,
With broken families and unwanted population.
Expect 3 out of 4 divorces in any given situation.
While the kids are left out for their street education.

And so-called freedom is obtained by good looks or a gun.

And money changes laws no matter what they've done.

And the greatest goal in life is to have some fun.
At anybody's cost, be number one.

Well I'm sick of these lies and denial.
If we care out there let's make our arrival.
Our 20th century advancement will go on for awhile...

How much more can we destroy in the name of survival?

On Death and Dying

You're the only thing that sobers me up,
and keeps me always trying.
And it may look bleak but I can't be weak,
and go on with more crying.
Each moment I search it won't get worse...
So when will I stop denying?
Give up these lies, time's ticking by,
as I watch this body dying.

I'm gonna get some answers.

The trivial things I'm caught up in.
Can I give up this fantasy?
I know there's more much more in store,
than what my eyes can see.
Five minutes, five weeks or fifty years,
which moment will be the last?
And when time runs out, what was it all about?
This is going by too fast.

You belittle my problems
and by doing so solve them.
No more worries today.
We say we understand you but don't plan for you
to be coming our way.
I fear for my peers,
and I see the future in each elderly bodies face.
But this material fantasy is hard to see,
and when death comes we're blown away.

Death and dying but no more crying.

Bodies.

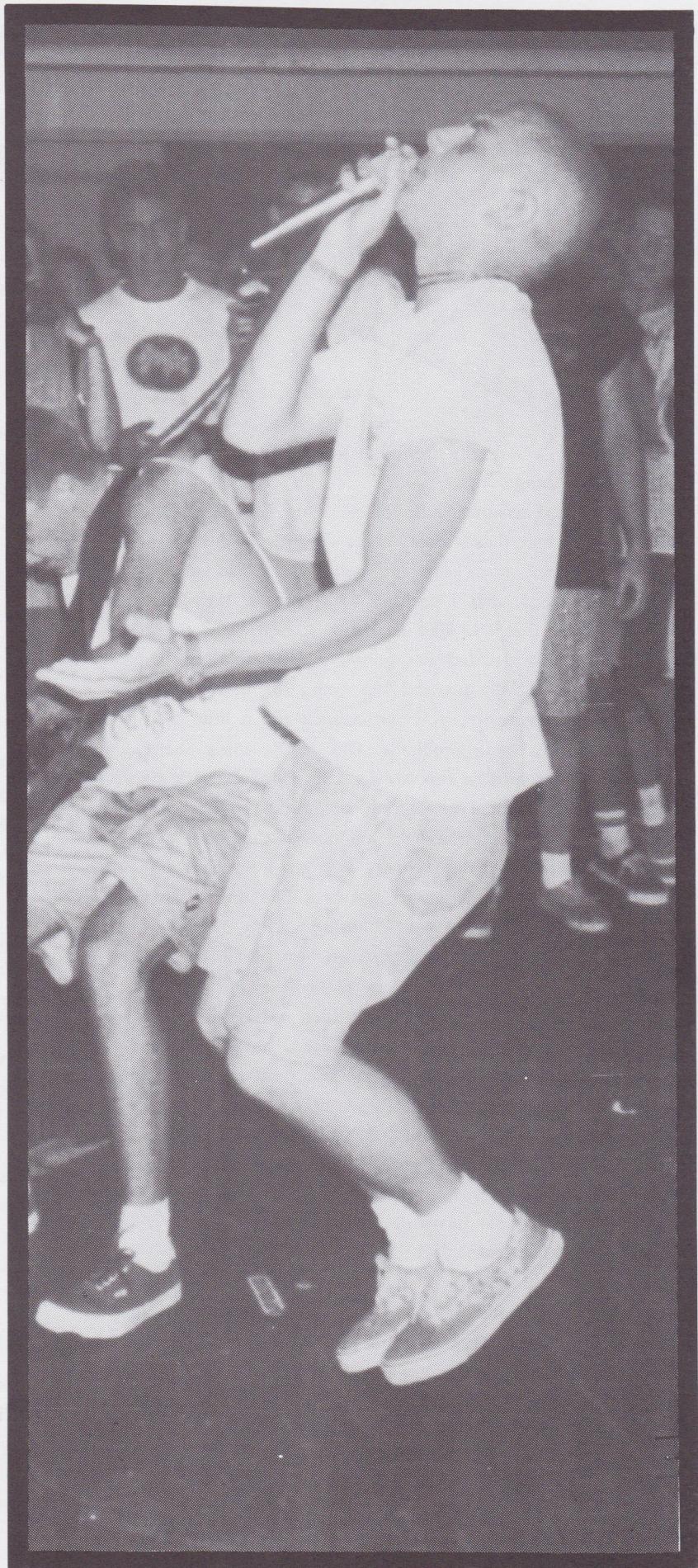
A society based on bodies.

*Sexual liberation that is chaining us down.
Giving us the freedom to spend our life chancing it around.
And the movies & the magazines tell us we're out of place,
If we don't have the fashion and the cash and a pretty face.*

*In my society... based on bodies judging bodies killing
bodies chasing bodies. Does anybody care?*

*And if you're ugly or fat, well sorry 'bout that.
You're ranked second class no matter where your head's at.
Now, thanks to our pursuit after the body,
We're shooting down our theory of equality.*

*Let's look beyond the body and envision the soul.
Real equality would shine free. That'd be my goal.
No tall/small, us/them, young or old.*



Stambha's Corner

Surely this is just some repressive victorian dogmatic religious attitude that were adopting, to stay away from being *bad* and doing no no things, right?

Let's just assume that you're right. This is all victorian. I had these moral ideas so drummed into me, and after going to college and being *bad*, I had such a guilty conscious, that I decided to become a Hare Krishna.

But now that I've had a chance to see what things are really like, I've decided I'm gonna give it up. I'm gonna grow my hair back out and I'm going for it. But I need your help very badly, you can council me a little bit.

I'm having some problems. One is the thing about work. I know after a few weeks I'm gonna be sick of it. I need help w/ that. I never did solve that. So keep that on hold, how you're gonna help me out of that one, cause that's a tough one, but actually I've got a tougher one.

The problem is this: Sex. It seems like there's always strings attached. Maybe you know something I don't, but it seems like there's always a problem. 1st of all, all the things like jealousy, and having to *say* the stuff, and having to go to the nautilus. It's such a hassle just to begin with, you have to play all these... but anyway, assuming you're willing to do all that (and apparently most people are), then there's all these difficulties: Now there's Herpes: 100 new cases of retinal blindness in America each year. And Syphilis and Gohnerriea are both over the epidemic limit... That's one problem.

So many people have all these diseases and everything, what am I gonna do? If I find one good old fashioned clean girl, then, in this culture, in order to still be clean, that must mean that she has some kind of neurosis. And that means I'm gonna have all kinds of weird mental trips. I'll be up all night reading some psychoanalysis book. In other words, it'll be a nightmare.

And of course the other problem is somebody getting pregnant, cause I just really don't want to get into that whole thing right away. You know, the kid running around the house, I'm just not ready for that. I've been living too

simple, everything's been too peaceful for the last 7 years to get into that. You can't just expect me to jump right into the fire.

On the other hand I'm gonna get some disease and I'm finished. I won't even know about it for years, until my brain stops working.

So that's 2 problems, and 1 of them is multifaceted: If she gets pregnant I gotta deal w/ this kid. And I don't know what to tell the kid when he asks me how to be happy, because I haven't even figured it out yet myself. "Oh God I can't handle these heavy questions."

Or she murders the child, and I'll have to suffer for it. If the girl gets pregnant and murders the child in the womb, then I'm implicated in the Karma. Regardless of what ridiculous laws are in the United States - this is legal, this is constitutional - that doesn't amount to a hill of beans. Even in this lifetime, if I've got any sensitivity at all, I'll feel guilty, I'll feel horrible.

Or I could suggest to her, in a very selfless way, that she take the pill to facilitate my recreation. But I know there's so many problems associated w/ the pill, Cancer... so many things, it breaks down the woman's body's immunological system. It would be kinda hard for me to justify... Of course I guess if I stayed down at the nautilus enough and developed a real caveman mentality then I really wouldn't care... But, at least where I am right now, I would feel guilty about asking another person to tear up their body just so that they could be a toy for me.

So that's kinda spoiled everything. And what I thought was a perfectly natural way to have fun, seems now to me to be very artificial, it seems to be a mess.

I stayed up all night thinking and I just bummed out on those. Then I hit on a solution, a panacea, that I thought might sorta at least get me by. And I figured this must be what keeps everybody going: intoxication.

I thought, "By God, if I'm gonna have to go to work, I can at least go stoned." (I'll act like I haven't tried that before) But I'll be honest w/ you, I'm not real excited about cirrhosis. Somehow the idea of my liver falling out just doesn't really... I know I can slide for a few years, but I'm not as young as I used to be, 40's not so far away, and that's when peoples livers start breaking down. And there's so much stuff about pot, the THC, and I have my own experiences of the space out carry-over. And I certainly don't want to mess around w/ acid, I've talked to so many people who've done acid and they're just completely out of it.

So I have these grave reservations about getting

intoxicated, which was my last hope. So what am I gonna do? You guys have got me convinced. I've been looking at your billboards all week. I'm fired up. I'm gonna shave off my shika, let the rest of my head catch up, and in the meantime I can act like Yule Brener or something.

But the problems... How do you solve these things? Could you throw a little light on it for me?

Yes, here's a volunteer. Thank you very much.

Andy: Stop going to extremes and go for moderation.

Stambha: Well, alright. Let's say I just have sex *one* time. With just *one* person who has herpes. Can you have a moderate case of herpes?

Andy: You could be even more moderate than that. Don't even have any sexual relations...

Stambha: Well, that's not moderation, that's abstinence. I'm *already* not having any sex. I'm looking for something different.

Andy: No sexual intercourse. Everything but.

Stambha: You can even get it by mouth! ...What about moderation in work? How can I be moderate and at the same time pay my rent? "Yes, I'm gonna be moderate this week. I'm only gonna work a little bit." I *tried* that. I got so sick of working that I was willing to be very poor, rather than work. I was being very "moderate." But I got tired of being hungry.

Student: One thing that's not moderate at all: stay away from the booze and the drugs. A sober high is much better.

Stambha: That's great. I tried to be straight for awhile. But when I saw all the problems with sex and work I couldn't do without the booze and the dope.

Student: Oh, That's just an excuse!

Stambha: Well, I admit that. I knew that. But the problem was: *I needed an excuse*. Everyone knows it's an excuse.

Everyone who smokes a cigarette knows it's not necessary. They even know it's killing them. But they don't stop. So, what am I gonna do?

...Come on you guys! I'm a freak, I'm trying to come back into the real world! *I'll grow hair!* I'll do the whole thing! Oh, here's a solution.

Andy: Why don't you teach meditation?

Stambha: That's interesting. That's a good possibility because it's kinda like the "mellow route." But the problem was, I tried that. Before I became a devotee, when I was in my "easty-westy" - that means you go to India to buy

some hash and you come back a guru in 3 weeks, "Baba Ram Das!" "Hey man, It's pretty far out, I just kinda... gurred out." I hung around with people like that for a while, but it really drove me nuts is the bottom line.

I went one night to hear Baba Ram das w/ some friends of mine from the ana-something-or-other ananda-something happy bliss holistic sunshine ashram or something. He gave them your philosophy, Andy, maybe you all read the same book. He said, "be moderate." Seems like it's a real handy word, "be moderate." But than I began to think, if I don't know who I am, then what's "moderate?" Relative to what? So I tried the mod. meditation route... That didn't work... Student 2: If your convictions, your beliefs, are strong enough, you can deal deal with those pressures w/out things like alcoholism. You can deal with those pressures. I'm happy...

Stambha: How do you deal with them? [silence] ...By becoming free from the body that dies.

Student 2: And you're saying you can't do that outside of a farm, or shaving your head?

Stambha: No, I didn't say that. But outside of realizing yourself as that which is different from the body, you can't.

Student 2: What if I get a job working on a farm, outside of the mainstream world, outside of your farm...

Stambha: That's no problem, as

long as you're Krishna conscious.

Student 2: *Right!* That's what I'm saying... If you're Krishna conscious, why can't you live outside of the temple?

Stambha: I can't engage in intoxication and illicit-sex and be Krishna conscious, I can't.

Student 2: But you don't have to participate in those things. You think every person in this room is doing that!?

Stambha: No. I'm not accusing, I'm just asking, "what am I gonna do?" You're telling me that there's people out there that are God conscious and they're working in detachment and there not engaging in sex and intoxication, and I'm thinking, what percentage?

Student 2: Very small, that's true.

Stambha: What I'm wondering, then, is: All of these billions of other people, who are working like anything, many, many, many of them at jobs that they hate - because it's necessary to have the kind of place they want to live in. To pay for the intoxication. To be able to take the girl



Or I could suggest, in a very selfless way, that she take the pill to facilitate my recreation. But there's so many problems associated w/ the pill, Cancer, etc... I would feel guilty about asking another person to tear up their body just so they could be a toy for me.

to the movies - I'm just wondering how they can get into it. I thought I might try to get into it.

Student 2: But can't you be a part of that minority?

Stambha: Yes. But then you don't get to have intoxication and illicit sex.

Student 2: But you can be happy within your self, if you're strong enough.

Stambha: I think that's *weird*. I think anybody that would give up sex must be *strange*. [laughter] People tell me that *all* the time. When I tell people we don't have sex they think we're *insane*... I'm already in that position. What I'm doing now is going back.

Student 2: OK, my question is: If you're strong enough in your beliefs and Krishna consciousness, why do you have to separate yourself from the rest of the community?

Stambha: I don't. I live in state college. I talk to hundreds and hundreds of people a week.

Student 2: OK why separate yourself in your dress?

Stambha: I like it, myself - As long as I'm going to be a devotee. This is assuming I'm don't go back. But, for the life I live now, it's practical. For one thing, because I have a shaved head and wear robes, when I walk up on campus people come and ask me about Krishna. Whereas if I was dressed in normal dress, they may not even... so it has a practical function in society. And the other thing is: The primary reason why we came here and the reason we stay here, is due to our vanity, our egoism in trying to be something separate from God.

Therefore, in order to give up a little of that vanity, I shave my head and I mark my body in different places as the temple of my soul. Just like a woman may put on mascara to project a certain image to society, I do this to project a certain image to Krishna - "I'm going to try to stop thinking that I'm something very special, and understand that I am part and parcel of You, Krishna. And that I'm acting in yoga, a harmonious relationship." No, it's not necessary. I could have hair. But it serves practical functions in my own dealing with my body.

Andy: Well, when I said moderation before, you put it in an absolute framework.

Stambha: Well, there's some things I find real hard to be moderate about. Like aging. I tried to age moderately, but there seems to be something beyond my control. Or dying

- How do you die moderately?

I guess I'll just stick around and keep shaving my head. If any of you come up with any good solutions, drop me a line. But in the meantime, I've tried that, and I wasn't happy. Not that I tried having hair, and I wasn't having hair. I tried being in material consciousness, you understand? It's not material setting, it's material consciousness.

Everybody's looking for happiness. But the happiness in the material world is temporary. You know, people hear that we wake up early in the morning they think, "oh my God it sounds so austere." But I see people knocking themselves out. Come on, you don't think it's austere for people to wake up at 6 in the morning and sit in the traffic for 2 hours, filling your lungs up with lead. That's an austerity.

To smoke cigarettes is an austerity. To take drugs is an austerity. You're tearing the body up. All of this stuff so I can be sexy. All this lifting weights and jogging. People are working hard for anything. And for what? For 5 minutes of sex pleasure. All I'm saying is, they're working, we're working, but the difference is we're getting something that's eternal. Krishna means the Absolute Truth, the reservoir, the source. Everything is in Krishna. Whatever excitement you're looking for. Whatever beauty you're looking for. Whatever knowledge you're working for, that knowledge is coming from a source and the source is Krishna.

So if I leave here and try to be a happy body - Grow out my hair, put on my Calvin Klein's - I'll never be able to because the body's always going to experience problems. You can never

make the body happy. Krishna says in the Bhagavad-gita that the realized soul doesn't seek pleasure in the external objects, but he's always enjoying the pleasure within, and thus he experiences unlimited happiness. Not \$.59 worth, not 2 hours or 20 years or 3 tablespoons. It's not limited to the sphere of what I can do with my senses and the sense objects. But it's something you can directly experience. If you try chanting Hare Krishna; Chant in the consciousness that you are a spiritual being, making this exchange with the supreme spiritual being; Chant seriously; then you'll experience some transcendental satisfaction, which is far better than anything you can connect up with any dead objects; any skin, any hair, any sugar. You'll experience something that goes directly to your self. So try it please, it's such a nice thing.

It's a real handy word, "be moderate." But what's moderate? Some things I find real hard to be moderate about. Like aging. I tried to age moderately, but there seems to be something beyond my control. Or dying - How do you die moderately?

ZINES:

The Razor's Edge #2. Probably the best Razor's Edge to date. The highlight is a very in depth interview with Ray Cappo. Also has a bunch of articles about Krishna consciousness. Good stuff. \$1 to Kalki dasa, c/o The Razor's Edge, PO Box 400271, Brooklyn, NY 11240-0271.

Pure Thoughts #3. Interview with Jay of Fed^{up}, and Kalki dasa of The Razor's Edge. Support a good guy from Texas and send \$1.50 to Bram, 3903 Haven Pines Dr., Kingwood, TX 77345.

Look Within #2. Dan says he'll have a sprinkling of Krishna related reading in here. 2 25 cent stamps to 4075 Minuet Circle, W. Valley City, UT 84119.

Caring Edge #2. Interview with Ray Cappo. Good layout and photo quality. Why wait... \$1.50 to 15749 Highview Dr, Apple Valley, MN 55124.

Bonanza #1. Yes, another interview w/ Ray. This one is about how he got involved with Krishna consciousness. Good pics. \$2 to 19744 Beach Blvd. Suite 413, Huntington Beach, CA. 92648.

Razors Edge #3. An article about the Best Wishes album cover. A great interview with Harley on Cro-Mags lyrics. Thought provoking articles on Krishna consciousness. \$1 to the same address as Razor's Edge #2.

Sold Out #8. A high class interview with Harley Cro-Mag. \$2 PO Box 7071; Windsor, Ontario; N9C-3Y6; Canada.

RECORDS:

SHELTER. I got the tape. This is good. This is great. Hopefully it'll be available before the next ice age. It's on Revelation. 12 inches. Totally blows away Youth Of Today. There's 2 full on thrash songs here which rule. The rest are grooving in the vein of I against I funk-rock. Strong, memorable riffs. Lyrics that gave me a jump start on life. Finished off with a experimental- industrial type song, which is pretty refreshing. All around, the best thing I've heard in a while, a long while.

FORCED DOWN. This 7 inch is emo and hard, you got to like it. Unusual vocals, that I personally like a lot. The songs themselves are incredibly well written. The production is rad. The lyrics are a little cryptic, but cool. I definitely recommend it. \$3.50 to Down, 2015 Garnet Ave. #5766, San Diego, CA 92109.

AGAINST THE WALL. The cover art may be cheesy, but the music inside rules beyond belief. Just to say I like this 7 inch is the understatement of the year. Great production. Great song writing. Great lyrics. No Address, so you'll want to look for it in the store. It's on Nemesis

AMENITY A three song demo tape from the coolest guys around. A good tape from a good band. Hopefully there'll be vinyl out soon. Definitely get this by sending \$3 to 1266 Finch Place, Chula Vista, CA 92011.

BOOKS:

The Science of Self Realization. This is a no nonsense introduction to the philosophy of Krishna consciousness. It's a collection of Interviews, lectures, essays, and letters by Srila Prabhupada. It's clear, concise and to the point. About 350 pages. \$1 to 17763 Bellechase Circle, San Diego CA 92128.

Food for the Spirit, by Stephen Rosen. An eye opening book about the role of vegetarianism in the world religions (Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, modern science and others). A must-read. 120 pages. \$6.95 + \$1 postage to 17763 Bellechase Circle, San Diego CA 92128.

Coming Back, the science of reincarnation. A definite breath of fresh air in an area so clouded over by amazing UFO reincarnation tales in Weekly World New and other trashy tabloids. Straightforward. 130 pages. \$1 to 17763 Bellechase Circle, San Diego CA 92128.

The Dark Lord / cult images and the Hari Krishnas in America, by Larry D. Shinn, Dean of Arts and Sciences and Professor, Bucknell University. Objective, scholastic analysis of the claims of Krishna "Brainwashing" etc. Well worth the price. 204 pages, with extensive notes and bibliography. \$15 + \$2 to KC, PO Box 12380, Philadelphia PA 19119.

Bhagavad-gita, as it is, translation and purports by Srila Prabhupada. What can I possibly say? Get it. \$1 to 17763 Bellechase Circle, San Diego CA 92128.

Do It!

"So many philosophies. So many concepts. But are they nothing more than a bunch of words on paper? Can they ever come to life in practical reality?"

Actually, yes. These is a very concrete process. Spiritual life is *not* something that only happens in some book or classroom. Spiritual life is *real*. And we can directly experience spiritual reality.

How? The first step involves abandoning intoxication, meat-eating, illicit sex, and gambling. In the material world we're already so over-burdened by all the lies and misconceptions we've been indoctrinated with. Intoxication only adds to that illusion, deepening the fantasy, strengthening the lies.

Meat-eating is unnecessary violence plain and simple. Eating the results of such violence rubs off on our psychology. Our mentality grows violent and ignorant, and it becomes very difficult to understand even the simplest spiritual truths.

Seeking satisfaction through sex life means agreeing to become a puppet on the strings of the advertising industry. It's also impossible to envision equality

while at the same time conditioning ourselves to see the opposite sex as objects of sense enjoyment. Beyond that, in order to 'enjoy' illicit sex we must first identify our self with the bodily senses we are trying to gratify. Because we are trying to understand that we are not these bodies, but spiritual beings separate from the body, illicit sex is not a helpful thing.

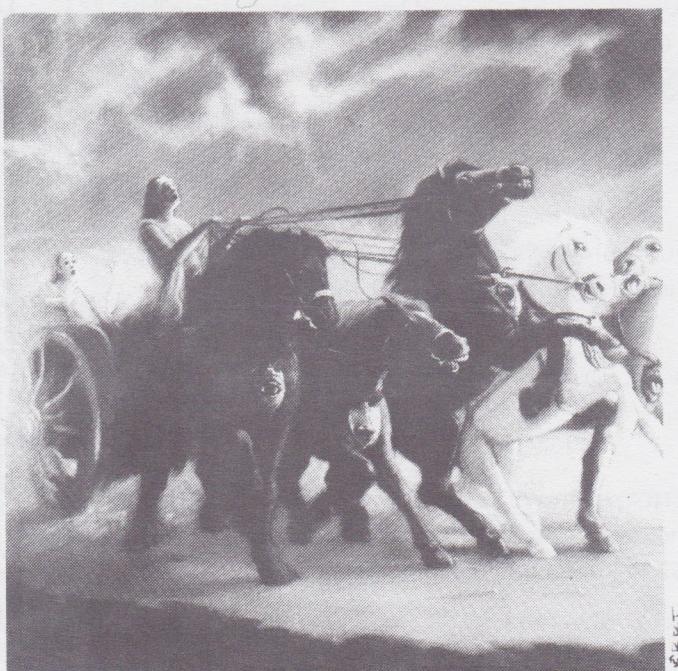
No gambling means not trying to cheat people and not wasting our valuable time on nonsense activities that have no relation to our spiritual goals.

Even more important than these four principles is the meditative chanting and congregational singing of the names of God. I know this sounds really far out and weird to many people, but please try to consider it with an open mind. Chanting Hare Krishna is not some new invention of the bell-bottomed '60's or something like that. Chanting the Hare Krishna mantra (*hare krsna, hare krsna, krsna krsna, hare hare, hare rama, hare rama, rama rama, hare hare*) is recommended all over the Vedic literature - which were compiled 5000 years ago and have an oral history

extending into antiquity.

Chanting is meditation on spiritual sound vibration; on the sound of God. By chanting, we directly experience, more and more, the reality and pleasure of spiritual life. Realizing such things, we naturally snap out of our enchantment with the material rat race. We find it easier and easier to give up activities which support the corrupt situation of the modern world. We are able to take an actual stance against injustice, because we are no longer bound hand and foot to the sense gratification they dangle before our noses as a ransom on our morality.

I can keep talking about this for years, but the best way to understand what I'm talking about is to make a little experiment and try it out for a while. Although I used to consider all this ridiculous, I now take these things very seriously, since they have had a deep and positive impact on my life. So if you have any questions and want to write me, I'd love it. Anyone who's interested can send a dollar (for postage) and I'll get you a copy of this book that describes meditation on the names of God in detail. Thanks for reading and please seriously consider these things. Spiritual life *does not* have to remain just words in a book.



THIS PICTURE is an analogy of the situation we're in. The individual self is the passenger in the chariot of the material body (and looking mighty stressed out). Mind is the driving instrument (the reigns), and the senses are the horses. Most people act at the horse level. The driver (intelligence) is asleep, the reigns (mind) are dragging on the ground behind the chariot, and the uncontrolled horses (senses) simply run in all different directions in search of better pasture; dragging the passenger (self) over rocky ground, into ditches, and off cliffs.

Or, hardly an improvement, we fly around on autopilot, blindly following the preprogrammed flight plans of the mind and intelligence - which only act on conditioning and habit (prejudice and hatred).

If we try to go where the horses want, the result will only be havoc and turmoil, because they all want to go in different directions and no matter how far they run, the green grass is always just over the next hill. But if the driver is using the reigns to direct the horses where the passenger wants to go, then there is success. In other words, if we want to get anywhere, we have to constantly critically engage the intelligence and attempt to direct and guide the flickering, whimsical mind. The mind, in turn, controls the senses and the passenger (you and me) gets a smooth ride home.

INTERVIEWS

Q: What's the need for a spiritual dimension in life?

Sergio: I think a spirituality is very important in all aspects of life. It should be a priority in anyone's life. You know? There's a lot of agnostic people out there, they want proof. And sometimes it's not really that hard to understand why they need that. Cause sometimes it can be kinda tricky, you know, and kinda hard to keep that faith. But then again, it's kinda almost obvious that there is a God. And it's not so much that you need proof - if there's a God or if there isn't a God. It's just like a faith...

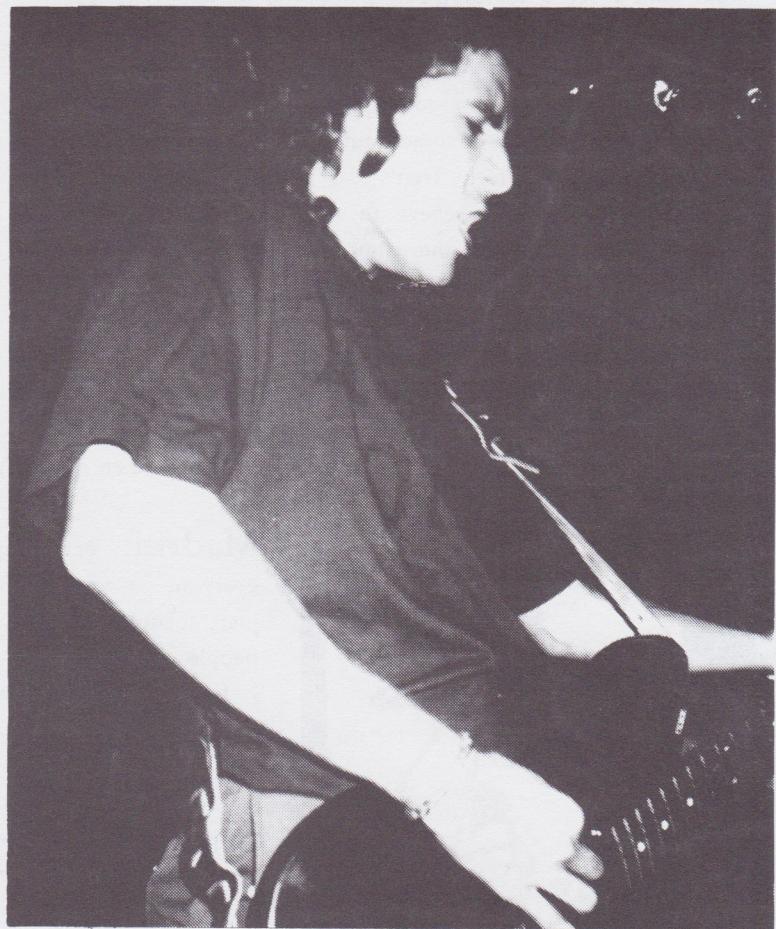
...There's so many different religions. And everyone believes that their religion is right. I just think they should have the basic fundamentals of it. What religion basically presents is a good way of living. But in hardcore, it's pretty much there, especially in straightedge music, you know what I mean?

It does help, protesting and standing up for what you believe. But it also starts inside your self. Until you find out who you are.... That's when the changes are gonna be made. You can do a lot by silence. And we shouldn't worry too much about what's going on right now. As long as we don't take part in it and keep in a spiritual state of mind, this time shouldn't matter...

Yeah, definitely in the hardcore scene there should be a spiritual sense. In everyone's life - punk or not punk.

Mike D: I think it is necessary to examine spirituality. Whether I can fully deem straight out whether you should or shouldn't... I don't know. But I do think, this is just myself, what I've learned... One thing we do know is that there's something we don't know. So, through that logic, it can lead me to believe that there's something beyond my self. Which also, I think, is within myself, I don't know if that makes sense, it's kind of a double thing.

I think I would wanna do it because I search for truth. I search for meaning, I search for life. I search for answers. There's so much shit out there just to bring you down. A lot of times, in my own life, I've had to have a lot of spiritual belief to pull my self through. I mean, I almost died from drugs. I almost overdosed on PCP. I got put in a rehabilitation center,



and I really didn't know my self. I really seriously came to the point of losing control of my self. That was like 4 and a half years ago. The thing that seriously got me through that at that time was faith and belief, in something, I didn't know what, and I still don't know what. But somewhere in the belief that there's something beyond. There's something that we don't know, which logic provides the possibility for. When I got into it then, it was more from a logical decision. I mean I was on my hands and knees, man. I was lost. I don't want to sound like, "then I found Jesus and blah blah blah." But I found something, I never labeled it, I still haven't because... God damn, I don't know what it is! But I do believe in something beyond my self. Definitely. And what it is, I don't know.

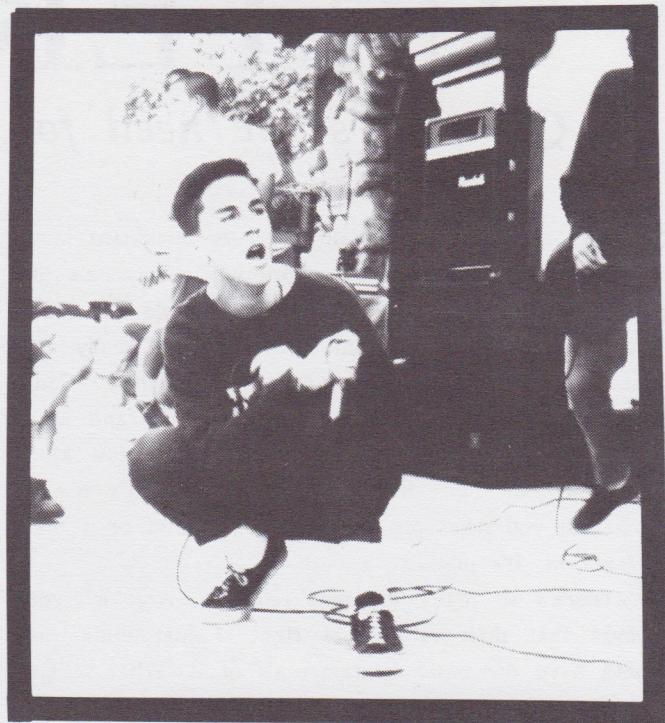
Do I see it good or necessary or redeeming for somebody to have a spiritual interest, belief, study? Yeah. The

FORCED DOWN

unexamined life is nothing. Right? I would definitely see a searching need. I guess the point I'm trying to get at is that I don't know if I've found something that fully redeems itself, because it's kinda hard, but I think that somehow there is a truth. I think there must be a truth, all right, you know what I mean? I don't know what it is and I search and I look at stuff. And I see a lot of truth in a lot of different things.

...If this is all there is, if this is it, I don't know - it doesn't seem like a whole lot to me. My ultimate thing is I don't know, but I'm here to try and figure it out. And I see some truth. And I see some stuff that leads me to, not so much "believe" but feel. That's the thing, I don't really find things that lead me to believe in a religion or something. But I find things that make me compelled or feel, I mean I feel it, I mean it's like- it is real, OK, that's it. So I don't know what it is, but it's real and it's there.

And I don't see the spiritual thing as a really negative thing, or a trend. Everything's a trend to that extent. People get into everything. There's people fully into it. And then all these people come along and just jump into *(continued on page 49)*



Madrid: Being spiritual, I think everyone is to a point. Unless they're just totally flat out against it, like people say, "Oh, I'm an atheist." But I feel that I'm spiritual to a point. You know, I tried... I went to a Christian church and it wasn't what I wanted... I went to the Hare Krishna temple... I don't know if I went there because they serve vegetarian food or if I went there to listen, it's weird now that I think about it.

To me, being spiritual doesn't really blend with hardcore. Hardcore is one part of your life, a music you're into or a philosophy. Being spiritual, that adapts to everything. When you're walking down the street, if you're into spirituality, you can be walking down the street and, you know, whatever, and there's nothing hardcore about it. There's nothing to do with hardcore around you. And you're dealing with it, you're spiritual. But I mean Hardcore only takes so much of

your time. I'm totally into hardcore, but I don't consider it my whole life. I think about other things, I do other things. I'm not just always at a hardcore show, or always playing in a hardcore band.

I don't think it really relates to hardcore. If you break it down, hardcore is music. I mean it's music to me. There's great feelings behind the music... The best bands, I think, are bands that are spiritually motivated. To a sense, I'm spiritual when I'm writing lyrics and stuff. I can't say I'm just blank when I'm doing it. Somethings motivating me.

I look up. I think about God. I think that there is someone guiding me. I don't know what it is. I look up though. I look up to the sky, you know, before I play, before I do a lot of things that I'm scared of. I don't know if there's anything there, it's just maybe that I'm talking to something... you know?

AGAINST THE WALL

Q: So tell me about the farm you live at now.

RAY: It's called Gita-nagari "the city of the Bhagavad-Gita." We're working towards self sufficiency and natural organic farming and milking as well as cow protection and becoming closer to God. It's located in Port Royal, Pa.

Q: Do you still do music or is that forbidden?

RAY: I'm always writing music, lyrics and poetry and I think I'm getting a lot fresher ideas. Krsna is all encompassing, so it's not necessarily far off. Like the lyrics on the Shelter record people can easily relate to, but at the same time I feel by expressing these feelings... Everything material is coming from Krsna so to just burn my guitar would be false renunciation, but to use it in His service... Than that would be perfection. You can't falsely renounce your bodily talents or qualities... Krsna was speaking to Arjuna, who was a prince... He didn't tell Arjuna to move to the Himalayas and become a monk.

Q: Somebody told me devotees are violent.

RAY: Prabhupada (the spiritual master who brought the teachings to the west) wanted to train us to be brahmanas. Qualities of brahmanas are non-violence, austerity, self-control, well versed in scripture, renounced, etc. We are definitely not violent, or if somebody you heard that was a devotee and was acting in a violent way they were probably acting on their own accord. We all have free will and in every religious practice you have the sincere and the insincere.

Q: So ultimately you'd say religion is one... or shooting for the same ultimate goal?

RAY: How I understand it is Krsna or God appears throughout the world or empowers persons throughout the

world (Mohammed, Jesus, Sankaracharya, Lord Buddha, etc.) to uplift society. I know in BG Krsna even states, "Where ever and when ever there is a decline in religious practice and a predominant rise in irreligion, at that time I descend Myself." So ultimately the Vedas aren't saying our path is right and your path is wrong. The Vedas alone put forth many paths. But we've got to make sure that the path we're following is bonafide and our spiritual master or teacher or priest or whatever is also bonafide. What I like about Krsna Consciousness is it's been passed down through the ages from spiritual master to disciple from the time of Lord Krsna Himself. You can actually trace this back historically. Also, the spiritual master isn't allowed to add or concoct his own philosophy, but

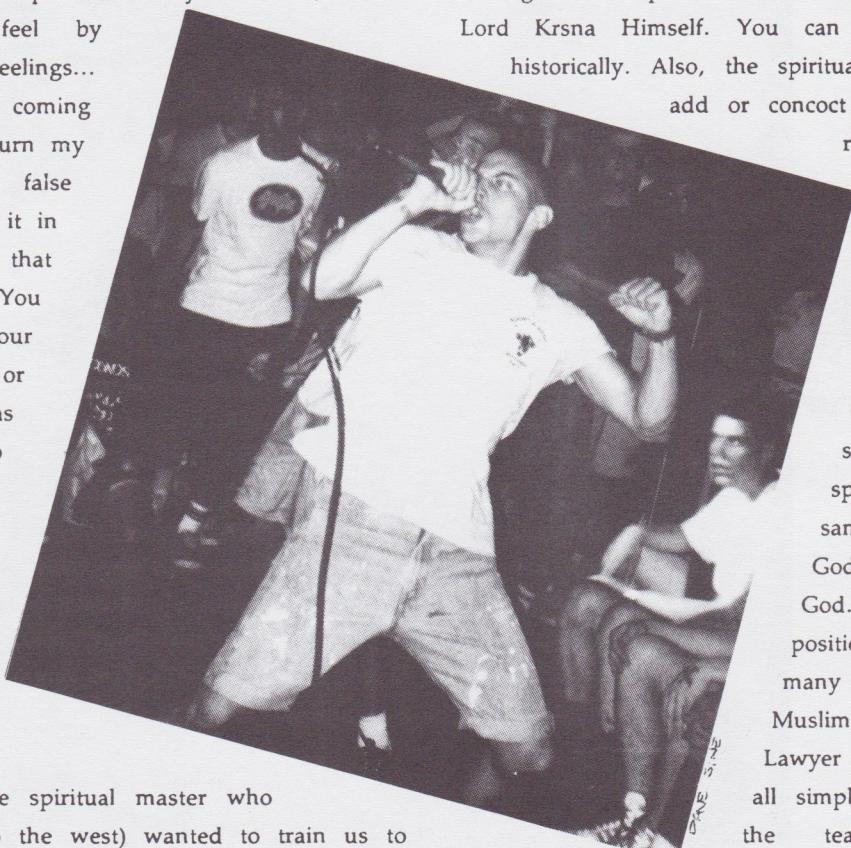
rather serve as a transparent medium.

So in this way scriptures like the Gita can be realized and understood when practicing properly under the order of a bonafide spiritual master. So again spiritually we are all the same... part and parcel of God or an eternal servant of God... This is our real position although we may have many bodily designations like Muslim, Hindu, Christian, Punk, Lawyer etc. Krsna says these are all simply bodily designations. So the teachings in BG are

transcending these "names" or religious sects and giving us a process to scientifically understand our real position.

Q: So Krsna or God is the "Shelter"?

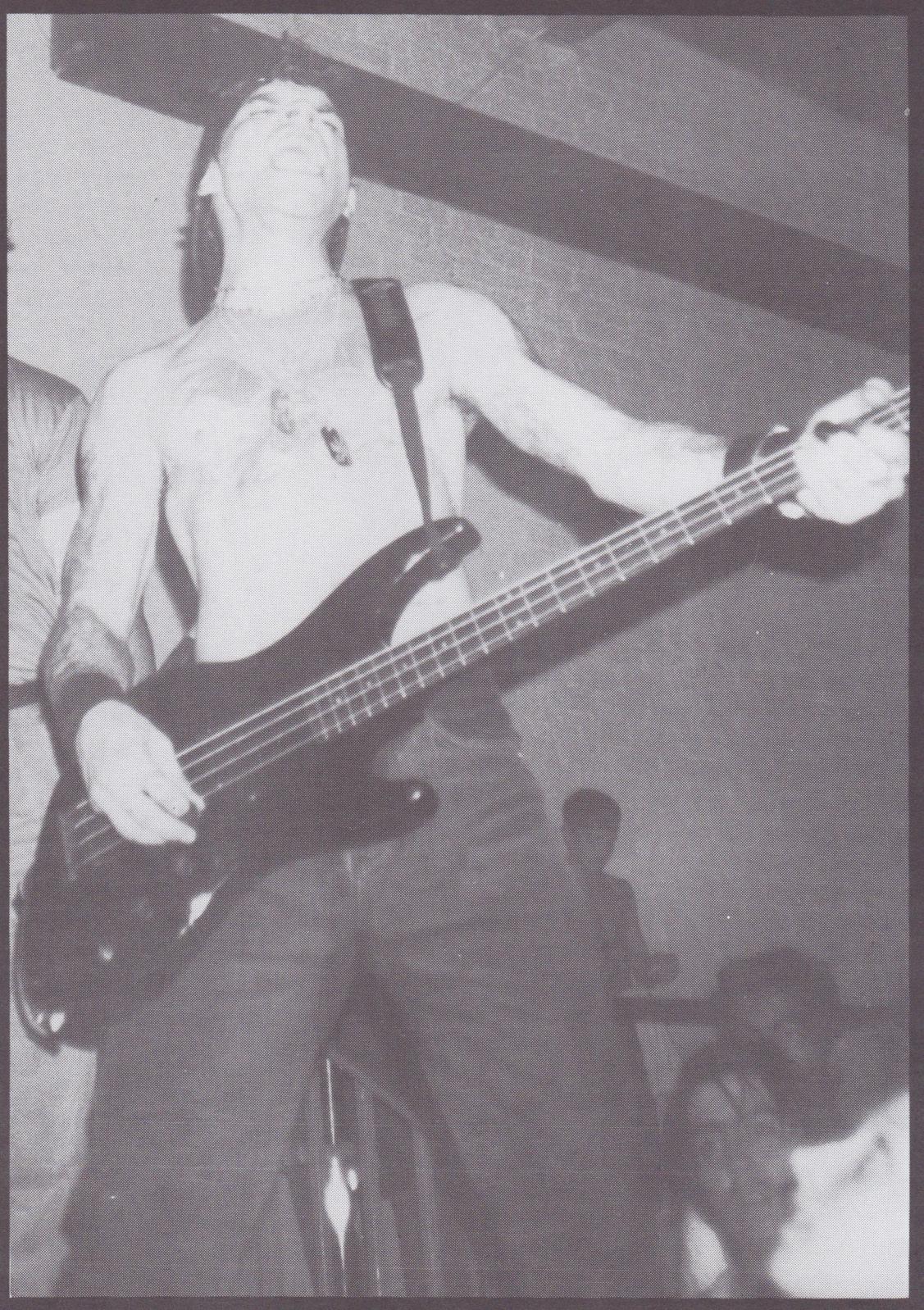
RAY: Ultimately, but not everybody thinks so. People take shelter in so many temporary things like family, girlfriend, boyfriend... or some escape route like intoxication or political philosophy or even religion. They take shelter even in their own fallible intelligence and mind. And these people claim to be "real brave" and not some "blind fanatic." So we're all taking Shelter, but where will this shelter get us ...more entangled or free?



S H E L T E R

Harley: "Hardcore doesn't have any philosophy. It's just like 'Yeah, get crazy, rebel.'

But they don't know what the hell they are rebelling against. What are they rebelling against? The whole country was built on sense gratification. Everywhere you look there are signs telling you "Drink this kind of alcohol" "smoke these cigarettes" and everything is sold with sex. If you are really rebelling you'll see this country killing all these animals. They are feeding us foodstuffs that are causing us cancer, and everything else - so I'm gonna rebel against that because it's bogus. Being a rebel means that you have to understand what you are rebelling against. Or else you are saying you are rebelling, but you are actually just trying to have a good time."



Me: Just say what you want to say.

Tim: Ok... [chewing an apple] well, something I might say is that this apple is the start of my fruit. Sunday I just eat fruit. Monday I don't eat anything. It's basically to clean my insides out, give my system a chance to catch up. And it also clears your mind up. Your mind is affected by everything your body takes in. Also, it's good in a spiritual sense. It kinda frees you from everything else, and you can really definately see something inside of you. Although I wouldn't call it a fast for just spiritual reasons; It goes hand in hand. Cause like in the Bible it says: when you fast, don't be like the heathen and go around bragging about it, showing your sorrow. And really there is no spiritual need for a fast, in the sense that it's gonna make you better in the eyes of God, as far as I think. But it really is therapeutic to clean yourself out, and one goes hand and hand with the other.

Me: Well, fasting might not make you better in the eyes of God, but it makes your eyes clearer to see God.

Tim: Oh yeah, definately.

Actually your mind kinda seems freer, bigger. You take in things a lot more. Some people have to be really careful about it. You don't just say, "Oh I'm just not gonna eat for 4 days..." You gotta come back into it right and everything. My diet is basically water, fruits, vegetables and grains. And I eat as little cooked food as possible, eating raw foods. Which again goes back to spirituality, it's allowing you to put better things into your system. Things which have to do with spirituality, instead of just things to consume.

Me: Anything else?

Tim: The other thing I wanted to say is, I've been doing a lot of studying on the Roman Catholic religion, cause I was brought up goin to a Roman Catholic church, and I never saw anything in the Catholic religion, basically. I always knew that God was there. And at a young age I learned about Jesus and the Bible. But I didn't learn it at all from church. It was kinda like I just picked it up on my own. So the more I study of the Catholic religion, there are so many things that are shocking about it; How it began and actually were it's going. And just the whole "organized religion" type situation, where there isn't really much emphasis placed on spirituality. The Catholic religion claims to be of the Christian

faith, whereas it really puts no real emphasis on Christ's teaching or anything like that. It's been really interesting because when I was young I looked at the church and thought, well you know they hold up this little piece of bread and they're saying that that's Jesus's body. And the priest claims to have the power to bring that to that bread. And then I looked at the Bible and I thought, well it says here that Jesus only makes that sacrifice once and that only he can do that... And the more I look at the catholic religion, or religion in general, in the sense of religion as being a man made form of expressing somebodies spiritual beliefs. True faith and spiritual belief has to come within your self. And we can learn from other people. But so many people just take the priest or popes word for it, and that's the way it goes.

Me: Yeah. Like, I see a lot of things in the Bible that point to vegeterianism.

But before, I had no idea...

Tim: Definately, yeah.

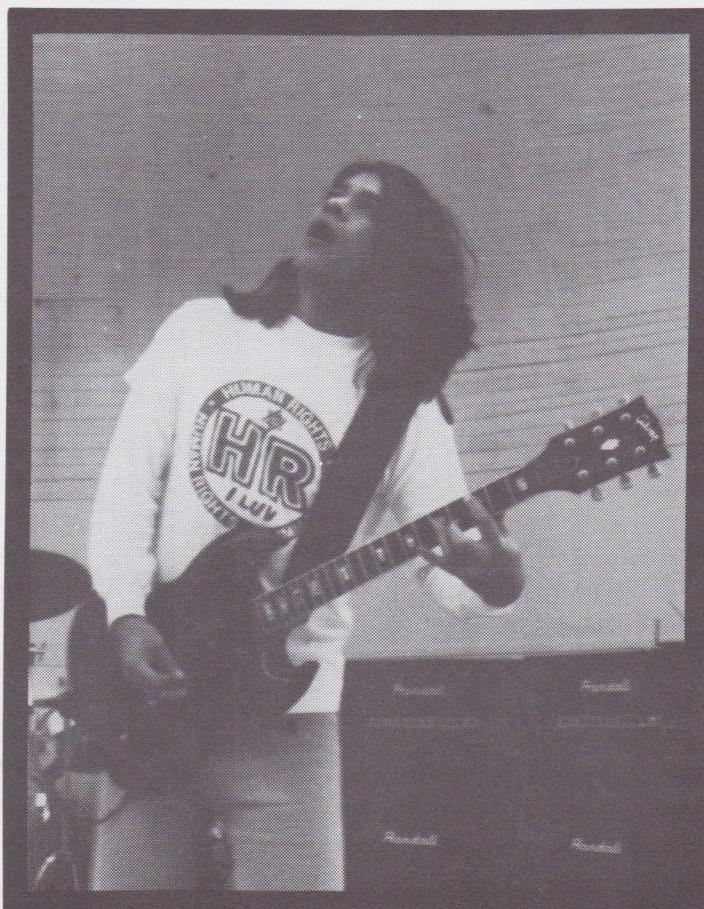
Me: I mean I know a lot of people that would consider themselves christian or Catholic and they would fight me to the death.

Tim: Exactly, they have no idea what's in their own Bible. Another thing is the Catholic church... their Bible is a little bit different than the standard Christain Bible. Parts of it are changed. But one thing you find in all of them is right in Genisis. It says, "I've given to you fruit from the trees... And this to you shall be for meat." Right off the bat, it says it right there. But it's interesting how people

can just put that aside. And that's basically from the religion of a pope saying, "well, let's make this like this... we'll make it OK to do that." A lot of people are scared to look at things like that. They always want to be comforted. You don't wanna be too realistic about things, you gotta have a little comfort, or else nobody's gonna wanna go to church.

Me: But the thing is; Eventually you water it down so much, you don't have the original thing anymore. That's why I think it's worth it to stick to it and keep it pure. You won't get so many people interested, but at least the people who are interested will get something real.

Tim: Yeah, it's true... [we talk about different topics for awhile] When you look in the Bible, revelation says: in the



end-time satan's not gonna appear as a guy with horns because that's too easy. Evil is deceiving. It's not just pentagrams and Motley Crue or Slayer. It's not that simple. I've been doing a lot of reading on this, finding verses in the Bible that the Catholic church basically contradicts. Just like with the so-called Virgin Mary. Now I believe that Jesus was born of a virgin birth. But the Catholics believe that she died a virgin, whereas the Bible, it says right there that Jesus had other brothers and sisters. And that whole thing is based on a lot of pagan worship too, the whole thing with Mary. Nimrod, he died. And his wife, she was pregnant and she said that she had a virgin conception, and it was Nimrod reborn in her. And people started making statues of her and Nimrod, and that exact statue is the statue that you always see of the so-called virgin Mary.

Me: Well, that's another thing right there. The concept that Nimrod would be reborn in her, that's a concept of reincarnation. But yet Catholics have a real hard time with that. They think that it's not a part of their religion.

Tim: Yeah, it's really true. Or they don't even look into it. Like the thing with animals. It says in the Bible that animals have souls. It comes right out and says it. Just like it says, in heaven the lion will lie down with the lamb.

Me: Yet I've heard Catholics say that there are no animals in heaven.

Tim: There's so many things like that. They don't bother investigating, "well why do I think like this? Why do people say that this is the way it is? Why is this diet coke supposedly good for me? Why is this pig meat that doesn't have as much fat in it as red meat, why is this supposed to be better? Why do I wear..." Some girl was showing me her cross on a necklace, "Oh yeah, I'm a Christian. I always wear this cross." Well did you realize that Jesus was nailed on a cross as a mockery. That was another pagan symbol. I realize that most people think that it's also symbolic of that he died, but...

I spend a lot of time just reading. Going to the library early in the morning when nobody's there. There's so many things you can find, just investigate. All these things I've found of fasting, on diet, on the Catholic church... there's so much information that's right under people's noses. I don't mean to sound like a representative for the library or something. But even looking in the newspapers, you find out so much information to learn on your own.

Rob: Right now, personally, I'm trying to find what really makes me happy. I'm trying my best to just take things in and take things in; and to just feel.

The other week, before me and my girlfriend broke up, she

was telling me about dissection. She was dissecting things. Cats. In her science department. I was just flaming. My heart was just flaming. I just could not handle it. What she was doing was so against what I believe in. I've always felt strong about vegetarianism, but I feel so much stronger about the animal abuse. I got so... visions in my mind, like a slide show. Bam bam bam: monkeys getting killed, cats getting dissected. I just couldn't handle it.

And then I just started thinking about the earth in general and all the shit they're doing to it. My philosophy right now is: sure the world's not gonna be destroyed by nuclear bombs, but it's this slow deterioration that we're going through. We're cutting down rain forests. We're industrializing these places that are so beautiful; that'll never be there again. God, that just made me, I just, it upset me really bad. I thought about it so much. Now I feel like I really

want to get more involved in doing something about it. So many places where I used to go. God, this used to be all fields, remember that? It hurts so much to see all that go, just because of someone else's big financial... project.

Me: And that's supposed to be progress...

Rob: It's not. It's the slow deterioration of the earth. I see so many people that are just going in a blind direction. I'm

not saying I'm such a righteous guy, but it's so hard to see people growing up, just the wrong way. Our society is so molded into them. It's so molded. It's so slammed into their brain. I don't get it. I thought kids were always the ones who go against society. And that they're the part that makes the changes. It seems like they don't wanna make a change. They just wanna leave things the way they are. Just keep goin in the same way. The earth is just gonna slowly deteriorate into nothing. I just don't understand it.



PRABHUPADA

I put together this Prabhupada interview from a bunch of different sources. I hope I did not compromise or distort anything in any way. I have indicated, by spacing, where different conversations begin and end.

Ms. Nixon: What is the difference between Krishna consciousness and Christ consciousness?

Srila Prabhupada: Christ consciousness is also Krishna consciousness, but because at present people do not follow the rules and regulations of Christianity - the commandments of Jesus Christ - they do not come to the standard of God consciousness.

Ambassador: In Moscow, so many people are hostile to religion, completely against it.

Srila Prabhupada: Why do you say Moscow? Everywhere. At least in Moscow they are honest. They honestly say, "We don't believe in God."

Ambassador: That's true. That's true. Srila Prabhupada: But in other places they say, "I am Hindu," "I am Muslim," "I am Christian," "I believe in God." And still they don't know anything about religion. *They don't follow God's laws.*

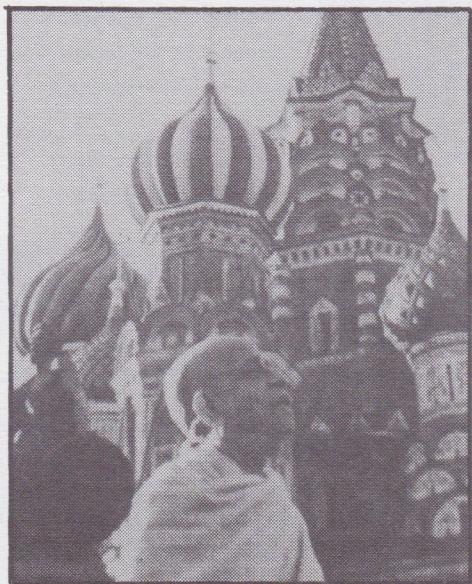
Ambassador: I'm afraid most of us are like that. That's true.

Srila Prabhupada: [Laughs] I should say that in Moscow at least they are gentlemen. They cannot understand religion; so they say, "We don't believe." But these other rascals say, "Yes we are religious. In God we trust." And yet they are committing the most irreligious acts. Many times I have asked Christians, "Your Bible says, 'Thou shalt not kill.' Why are you killing?" They cannot give any satisfactory answer. It is clearly said,

"Thou shalt not kill." - and they are maintaining slaughterhouses. What is this?

Visitor: Christians take this commandment to be applicable to human beings, not to animals.

Srila Prabhupada: That would mean that Christ was not intelligent enough to use the right word: *murder*. There is *killing* and there is *murder*. *Murder* refers to human beings. Do you think Jesus was not intelligent enough to



use the right word - *murder* - instead of the word *killing*?

Student: Srila Prabhupada, Christianity's sanction of meat-eating is based on the view that lower species of life do not have a soul like the human being's.

Cardinal Danielou: We admit that in the animal there may be the same type of biological existence as in men, but there is no soul. We believe that the soul is a human soul.

Srila Prabhupada: Our Bhagavad-gita says, "In all species of life the soul exists." The body is like a suit of

clothes. You have black clothes; I am dressed in saffron clothes. But within the dress you are a human being, and I am also a human being. Similarly, the bodies of the different species are just like different types of dress.

There are 8,400,000 species, or dresses, but within each one is a spirit soul, a part and parcel of God.

Cardinal Danielou: But the idea that all life is part of the life of God is difficult for us to admit. There is a great difference between human life and animal life. Only in human beings do we find a metaphysical search for the meaning of life.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. So metaphysically search out why you believe there is no soul within the animal - that is metaphysics.

Ms. Nixon: Can women also succeed in Krishna consciousness?

Srila Prabhupada: We make no distinction on the basis of sex. We give Krishna consciousness to both men and women equally. We welcome women, men, the poor, the rich - everyone.

Reporter 1: Your Divine Grace, often when people pursue what you term "spiritual life," they seem to forget about pursuing the things of this world - making this world comfortable.

Srila Prabhupada: Making this world "comfortable"? That will never be possible. Do you understand this? Let us say you take a fish out of water and put him on the land. Now, you may give the fish a lovely velvet cushion and everything nice. But will the fish be comfortable?

Reporter 1: No. He'd be out of his element.

Srila Prabhupada: Similarly, we

living entities are spirit soul. So in this material body in this material world - this means we are out of our element.

So the sum and substance of this Krishna consciousness movement is to educate people in how to be situated on the spiritual platform, how to be happy.

Dr. Singh: Since scientists cannot see the spirit soul, they say it's existence is very doubtful.

Srila Prabhupada: If you inject just one grain of deadly poison into someone, he immediately dies. No one can see the poison or how it acts. In the same way, the Vedas say that because the minute particle called the soul is within the body, the whole body is working nicely. If I pinch myself, I immediately feel it, because I am conscious all over my skin. But as soon as the soul is absent, which is the case when my body dies, you can take this same skin and cut it and chop it, and no one will protest. Why is this simple thing so hard to understand? Is this not detecting spirit?

Dr. Singh: That is the soul. But what about God?

Srila Prabhupada: First of all let us understand the soul. The soul is a small God. If you understand the sample, then you can understand the whole.

Now here is matter [pointing at a dead tree]. Formerly leaves and twigs were growing from this tree. Why are they not growing now? Can the scientists answer this question?

Karandhara dasa: They would say

the chemical composition has changed. Srila Prabhupada: All right, then if they are so advanced in knowledge of chemistry, they must supply the proper chemicals to make the branches and leaves grow again. Scientists say that the chemicals are the cause of life. But all the chemicals that were there when the tree was living are still present. And life energy is also there. There are thousands of microbes in the tree, and they are all living entities. No one can claim that life energy is lacking in the body of this tree.

Dr. Singh: But what about the life energy of the tree itself?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, that is the difference. The living force is individual, and the particular individual living entity which was the tree has left. This must be the case, since all the chemicals that are necessary to support life are still there yet the tree is dead.

Srila Prabhupada: What do you think - that life is a product of chemicals? Do you mean to say that life is a product of mere chemicals?

Dr. Hauser: That is what I've been taught, yes. About the evolution of the earth and all the different stages of life.

Srila Prabhupada: Do you think that's a fact?

Dr. Hauser: It's not a fact. I don't

know whether it's a fact. I... But that's what I've been taught.

Srila Prabhupada: Then that means currently you are illusioed. You are not confident, but still you accept that theory. This is illusion.

Dr. Hauser: But... yes... but...

Srila Prabhupada: So you should apply your reason. From practical experience you should ask yourself: Is life produced from matter - or is matter produced from life? Where is the evidence that life has ever come from matter? Is there any evidence in history?

Dr. Singh: Many of my scientific colleagues say that intelligence is simply a molecular interaction within the brain.

Srila Prabhupada: Some molecular interaction may be occurring, but the interaction is not simply molecular. Intelligence has to do with the soul,

not simply with the brain.

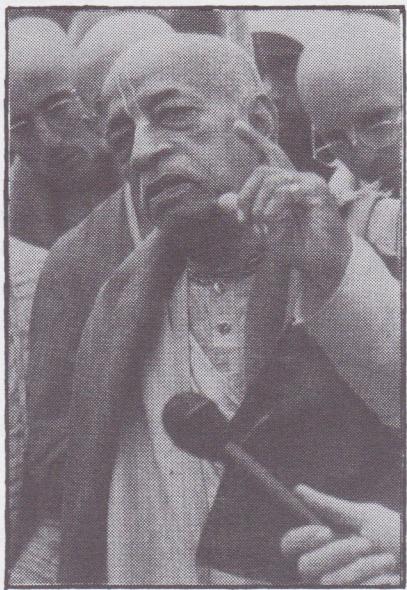
Dr. Singh: They say the brain is the source of intelligence.

Srila Prabhupada: No. Take electricity, for example. Electricity moves between the gross elements and through a gross wire. But the electricity itself - it is not those elements, not that wire. It is subtle. You cannot see this subtle thing directly; you can

see it only when it interacts with something gross. But the subtle thing is independent and distinct from the gross things.

So although we cannot see the soul directly, why not admit that it exists? The soul is the most subtle, but we can see it through its effects. Why not admit that it exists?

Dr. Singh: Yes. Far too many scientists have left the soul out of



their discussion of reality. Instead, they try to reduce reality to matter. And yet we see the existence of the soul. It is beyond our comprehension, but it exists. We should not ignore the soul simply because it is inconceivable.

Srila Prabhupada:

Actually the soul is conceivable, because we can understand much about it by observing the way it interacts with matter.

Srila Prabhupada: No one wants to die - unless he's a madman. So how can these modern rascals think they're free when they have to die? What is the answer?

Disciple: They will spout some nonsense. "I accept death as part of life."

Srila Prabhupada: Death is "part of life"?

Disciple: Yes. "It's natural."

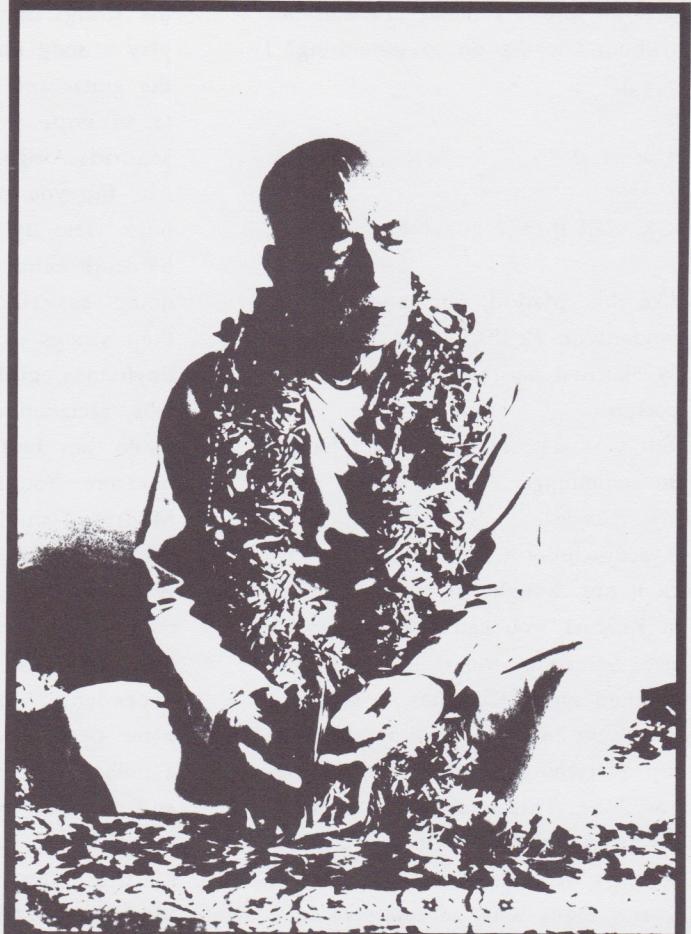
Srila Prabhupada: Well then, rascal, when there is some danger of death, why do you go away? Sit down and die. [laughter]

But an intelligent man does not want to die. He wants to become spiritually realized and then return to the spiritual world and live with God.

Reporter 3: Srila Prabhupada, what about other religions, like Christianity and...

Srila Prabhupada: There is no second religion. There is only one. Now, as soon as you designate "Christian," "Hindu," "Muslim," that falls short of the genuine spiritual conception. Just as God is one person, so genuine religion is one thing. Designated religion - conceiving of "our Christian God" or "our Hindu God" - falls short.

Due to our so-called sophisticated



mind we say "Christian religion," "Hindu religion." But religion is one thing. It means to glorify God's holy name and abide by His laws. That is the spiritual platform.

Devotee: Prabhupada, you have said, "preaching God's message is a thankless task"

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, just look at Jesus Christ - crucified. Such a great personality, the son of God. He wanted to deliver God consciousness. And in return, he was crucified. We don't take Jesus Christ as insignificant. We give him all honor. He is a pure representative of God.

Devotee: Yes. He's been world-famous for the last 2000 years

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, it's not a joke. In Melbourne, when a priest asked me, "What is your idea of Jesus Christ?" I told them, "He's our guru." This they very much appreciated. Christ is preaching consciousness of God. So he is our guru, our spiritual

master. That's a fact. Don't take him otherwise. He's our guru. Devotee: So Christ was a pure devotee of God, teaching devotional principals.

Srila Prabhupada: Oh, yes. Sometimes people make propaganda that Christ may have eaten fish or even meat. But even if this were true, it would only have been because nothing else was available, not because he wanted to eat such abominable things for his own personal sense gratification. If nothing else were available, what could be done?

It is not that in your America - with such bountiful grains and nuts and milk and cheese -

you can keep slaughterhouses and daily kill millions of poor animals on the plea of "protein," or "Christ may have eaten this." That is rascaldom.

Priest: Everybody who believes in God and who leads a good life and does his best in this world -

Srila Prabhupada: Then the next

question is, What is the good life?

Priest: obeying the commandments of God.

Srila Prabhupada: One commandment is, Thou shalt not kill. So if somebody kills innocent animals and eats them, is he leading the good life?

Priest: Father, you're being a bit unfair, Thou shalt not kill means, "Thou shalt not unnecessarily take away life." How would we be able to live if we didn't eat meat?

Srila Prabhupada: How are we living? We are eating nice foods prepared from vegetables, grains, fruits, and milk. We don't need meat.

(continued on page 37)

A Conversation with Madrid

Madrid: I don't know, I mean can you be spiritual without latching on to something? I mean, *can you?*

Me: Yeah.

Madrid: *Can you?*

Me: Yeah.

Madrid: OK well then I guess I'm into it. But...

Me: It's like this, Madrid: Someone who's 100% dependent on Krishna, God, someone who's fully "latched on" to God, that's a spiritual person.

Madrid: But you just said you don't have to latch on to something.

Me: Exactly. [Laughs]

Madrid: Exactly dude.

Me: Check it out though. In order to fully depend on Krishna, you can't be dependent on *anything* else. Someone who is really heart and soul latched on to God has *no* other dependency in the *entire* material world. They can give up everything - drugs, fame, social clicks - everything. This is the only person in the world who is not dependent on anything.

Madrid: But he's dependent on Krishna.

Me: Right, and that's why he can give up every other dependency. If you just try to give up things, that won't ever work. If you just give up drugs and don't replace it with something better, you'll fall back down. The principle is to give up the lower things in favor of the higher things. Replace them with something better...

Madrid: Dude, that's so true. It's weird... Like drugs. I gave up drugs and replaced it with the whole straightedge thing.

Me: Exactly. And the spiritual person gives up all false shelters and takes shelter of Krishna. Since Krishna is the source of everything, the spiritualist can give up *anything*, without a hassle. But if you just try to renounce the world without replacing it with something better, that's the most difficult thing. Actually, it's impossible.

Madrid: That's true. But why's it *impossible*, you know? And why is being dependent on Krishna any better than being dependent on crack or something?

Me: The thing is, we're not independent entities. By nature, we're just not built that way. We're like guitar strings. You can't take

the strings off a guitar and expect them to play a song on their own. They have to be in the guitar and the guitar has to be plugged in to an amp.

Madrid: Alright.

Me: But you can't just take the strings and hook them up to anything and expect to play hardcore either. That's what everybody is doing, basically. They're going around hooking their strings to whatever they can find.

Boyfriends, girlfriends, football teams, secure jobs, sectarian religion, anything. But after a while they find that they're not playing hardcore. You know what I mean.

Madrid: I think.

Me: So that's what the spiritualist is against - going around hooking up to every crutch that comes our way. Now, your question was, "why is it impossible to give up every dependency?" Because we *really are* just strings. Some people, after latching themselves on to a million different crazy things, get burnt out and say that we shouldn't latch on to anything. But they can never do that.

Madrid: Why not?

Me: They're strings.

Madrid: Yeah but that's just what *you* say. They might think they're *not* strings...

Me: But the fact is that they *are* strings. It's *not* just what I say. If it was just my opinion, then you should be able to show me just one person who is not dependent on anything at all.

Madrid: Well, how about some 'prabhu' in the mountains or something.

Me: He's dependent on the earth for producing vegetation. He's dependent on his stomach for digesting food. He's dependent on the light and warmth of the sun. He's dependent on so many things.

Madrid: OK, I see what you're saying.

Me: OK. Now, the spiritualist gives up everything. How? Simply by becoming fully dependent only on the Supreme Person. He puts his strings back where they belong. In this way, he (he or she, whatever) can give up anything, because Krishna is everything. Like we said before, the way you give up something *permanently* is by replacing it with something better. Like I gave up meat. I don't even think about it, it's not a problem,

Bhagavad-gita 16.9

*etam drishtim avashtabhya
nashtatmano 'lpa-buddhayaha
prabhavanty ugra-karmanaha
kshayaya jagato 'hitaha*

TRANSLATION

Following such conclusions, the demoniac, who are lost to themselves and who have no intelligence, engage in unbeneficial, horrible works meant to destroy the world.

PURPORT

The demoniac are engaged in activities that will lead the world to destruction. The Lord states here that they are less intelligent. The materialists, who have no concept of God, think that they are advancing. But according to *Bhagavad-gita*, they are unintelligent and devoid of all sense. They try to enjoy this material world to the utmost limit and therefore always engage in inventing something for sense gratification. Such materialistic inventions are considered to be advancement of human civilization, but the result is that people grow more and more violent and more and more cruel, cruel to animals and cruel to other human beings. They have no idea how to behave toward one another. Animal killing is very prominent amongst demoniac people. Such people are considered the enemies of the world because ultimately they will invent or create something which will bring destruction to all. Indirectly, this verse anticipates the invention of nuclear weapons, of which the whole world is today very proud. At any moment war may take place, and these atomic weapons may create havoc. Such things are created solely for the destruction of the world, and this is indicated here. Due to godlessness, such weapons are invented in human society; they are not meant for the peace and prosperity of the world.

A Conversation w/ Madrid

because now I eat prasadam treats.

Madrid: [laughing] That's pretty rad.

Me: And Krishna is the best thing. He's the source of everything. So if you're hooked up with Krishna, you can give up *anything*.

Madrid: OK I got that. But what about my other question, Why is Krishna any better than crack?

Me: What it boils down to is that crack will not satisfy you. Crack, fame, wealth - all these things are very limited. They can't offer full satisfaction. So after a while you will have to move on to the next thing, looking for something that satisfies. First beer, then booze, then pot, then crack, then coke, then acid...

Madrid: That's definitely true.

Me: The thing is... anything in the material world can only offer temporary and partial shelter. It can offer only illusion as shelter. But the Supreme Cause of all Causes is the permanent shelter. He offers spiritual reality as shelter, not material illusion.

Madrid: Then how come some people who are devotees sometimes leave the movement?

Me: It's not just that you sign some piece of paper that you are a devotee... Put some beads around your neck or

shave your head or whatever... "OK I'm a devotee. I'm fully dependent on Krishna now, so that's that." Becoming dependent on Krishna is the hardest thing we'll ever do. We have to give up *all* these material things that we're latching on to; our haircuts, our clothes, our little social clicks, our macho/femmo attitudes, our whatever. And that's the hardest thing to do because we've got all this faith in these things. We think they're so important and that without them we'll lose our identities. It's a struggle, to truly depend on God and only God. It's not an easy thing, for most of us at least. But if you actually become fixed-up in depending on Krishna and nothing else, then you've got everything, you'll never be dissatisfied.

Madrid: So you're saying that you can be spiritual and not latch on to anything, because you've got Krishna?...

Me: Right. I'm saying that being spiritual means you don't latch onto any of the *false* things, only to reality.

Madrid: Because it's not possible for us no to depend on something, because we're like strings on a guitar?

Me: Right.

Madrid: OK that's pretty cool. I think I kinda understand what you're talking about.

Dude, let's talk about getting some *sabji*...



Soul Expression

EMPTY DAYS

Monotony grinds me down
it keeps me down
I've lost my faith in this haze
these ways have led to Empty Days
now I struggle to find
some Love or some peace of mind
although still in my youth
I feel I'm running out of time.

empty - the days they pass me by
empty - time lost at the blink of my eyes
empty - the feeling is gone

motivation runs thin, and within
sometimes I feel I cannot win
against it, I grow so tired
the constant repetition
the stagnate condition
Empty Days force me into submission
how can I break through?

UNBROKEN

In spite of your actions
I lay my hands down
I won't resort to violence
yet I won't be pushed around
I'll sit here and take everything you've got
from ever last shove
to every cheap shot

and my spirit remains Unbroken.



Violence on the Dance Floor

Everyone's been to the show: Ten thousand miles of empty space between the stage and the 200 people cowering in the distance. Up and down the vacant pit, two or three figures stroll about like royalty. Back and forth. Kings of the pit, Lords of the dance floor. The foolish and the fooled.

I remember how many times I've done the same stupid thing. Clearing the dance floor, striding around, looking hard and cool and all that. We're all fools. What happens at a hardcore show? Is it a chance to play out some macho fantasy? The opportunity to intimidate others, to feel superior - in control?

A fight. "He bumped me." We stand in the middle of about 50 kids running around at full speed, and we're hot under the collar because someone bumped us? What's really going on? What kind of head game is going down here?

This: We've all got our inflated egos to maintain. Even the sappiest Sid Vicious 8th grade punk rocker thinks he's Mr. Hardcore, king cool. We've got this image, this fantasy, and we're dying to live up to it. "I'm the hardest, no doubt. When I dance the earth shakes and people move it or lose it. When I walk into a show everyone knows it. When I talk people listen. No one wants to get in my way."

We can dream like this until hell freezes over. But, inside, we know the real deal. Our fragile fantasy lives are so egg-shell that something as trivial as being bumped is enough to shatter the whole thing - and send us into a desperate and furious attempt to put humpty dumpty back together again, with our fists.

So we're cruising the pit, staring everyone down and waving our arms around, we're loving it - because now we're really getting a chance to live the fantasy. But, underneath all the bravado, we are brittle little twigs in the deadly grip of nature. Tiny. All our big muscles and spiked armbands are simply playthings in the hands of Time. At any moment nature may bat an eyelash and everything - mohawks, docs, X's and all - finished: death. Even if I could get the perfect

fantasy and be the hardest dancer on the face of the earth, death is standing right behind me. He blinks... game over. Death comes for everyone, tall and small. No matter how loud you're shouting about being in control of your actions and not needing a crutch, death comes and shuts down your show.

We know all these things. It's no big secret. But we choose to live in la-la land, thinking we're these big macho tuffguy. And as we strut back and forth on the dance floor, flexing our neck muscles, we know deep down - it's all a big sham, a bluff. And therefore we have to go lunatic as soon as there is any threat to our tiny little dreamworld - immediately fight

and prove manhood. It's a fool's game.

And it's not that we're the only ones who have to live in a dream world. It's not that only "misguided youths" are fantasy addicts. Everyone. This whole material world is a dream arena, a chance for the individual soul to try playing God. The search for power and prestige, for fame and wealth, all this. Look at these 3-piece-suits, they're playing the same fantasy as the docs and X's. Different props, same play. The play is called: I'm God. Everybody thinks "I'm cool. I'm the center of attention. I'm the pillar of

the universe man, I'm the hardest guy in the universe, you wanna mess around? I'll take you out homeboy, don't mess around with me. I'll ruin your business / I'll break your neck."

The trouble is that this dream clashes so loudly with reality. And because it's so difficult to maintain this dream, we have to fight; wars, gangs, fists whatever. We can go on throwing punches as long as we like, but why live in this bogus dreamland? In this theater? Why not stop? Why not accept that we're not the Whole, that we're parts? Why not accept that we are all small and fragile? Fantasy ego is very delicate and must be defended day and night with fanatic diligence. But reality defends itself. So why not accept reality and give up this futile dance floor violence?

IEven the sappiest Sid Vicious 8th grade punk rocker thinks he's Mr. Hardcore. We've all got our inflated fantasyland egos to maintain. But deep down we know it's all a big sham, a bluff. So we have to go lunatic as soon as there is the slightest threat to our tiny little dreamworld - immediately fight and prove manhood.

I'm not "pro-life." I'm not "pro-choice."

I **am** anti material world. I **am** anti exploitation. That will be the standpoint from which I will explore this very heavy issue.

I'll start off by telling you honestly that I'm scared. I see another blanket being pulled over our eyes. In this article, I'll try to deal honestly with some of this mythology, in the hope that we can join together more solidly in our combined effort against the forces which perpetrate material consciousness, exploitation, oppression, and suffering.

Abortion and Equal Rights.

Abortion has from day one been equated with freedom and equal rights. All who are sincerely interested in equal rights, please consider this possibility: *Abortion itself is a tool for exploitation and sexism.*

It is my understanding that the greatest threat to true equal rights for women is the enduring idea that they are sex toys for the superior male. The main cause of oppression is sexual exploitation. In order for women as a class to become free from suppression, they must become free from being seen as objects to be used for gratification of the male genitals and ego.

I have not been able to find a way in

which abortion serves this purpose. In fact, I have only run up against case after case where abortion would actually *increase* the current "female sex-doll" illusion. In a society where abortion is commonplace, Joe Stud goes out to the bar to find a 'girlie'. He picks one up, satisfies his genitals, and leaves. 'Girlie' gets pregnant. 'Girlie' aborts. Joe doesn't bat an eyelash. The wheel rolls on: Joe continues to exploit; 'Girlie' continues to be a dispensable object.

One argument may be that abortion will free the female from the burden of an unwanted child. Besides, she "consented" to Joe. Nothing's wrong; She gets to do what she wants and so does Joe, and neither have to worry about a baby.

However, it could be said that many Africans "consented" to their slavery in that they willingly woke up and went out into the cotton fields each morning. Yes, some protested, just as some women are protesting, but mostly they were "consenting adults." Does this justify their slavery? their exploitation?

It is true that abortion saves the female from having to support the unwanted child. But it is also true that standing up to Joe's power base by refusing to submit to his sexual

conquest would also save her from having to support an unwanted child. Furthermore, she would be fighting against her social role as sex object, by refusing to play that game, and would be working to end sexism. In this way one could truthfully equate abortion, *not* with freedom and equal rights, but with oppression and injustice.

The other argument may deal with the poor and minority groups who have no way to support children, and must abort or starve.

In the case of the poor minority. The *real* oppression there is that they are on self-destruct. Wasting their energy on exploiting each other, they have nothing left to fight The Man who keeps them down in the slums. Abortion can be used as a tool to keep them caught in this vicious cycle. Without abortion, conditions will eventually get horrible enough that the oppressed will have to revolt, riot against The Man and demand redemption. Abortion is introduced as a control valve, to let off some steam in these tense areas, to facilitate their continued exploitation of one another, to insure that they will

never build up enough energy to fight back with any real intensity. The Man remains The Man. The

power base is secure.

In all these cases abortion is portrayed as a solution to a necessary problem. The "necessary problem" is The Man's exploitation. Seeing that we want our peace and equality, The Man proposes abortion in an attempt to divert us from the real problem: his control over us.

In other words, although abortion is sold to the public as a way to solve a problem, the real problem is safely avoided. The problem is that people are treating other people as sex objects; as sources of gratification; and not as persons. This is the problem that The Man perpetrates and that abortion does nothing to solve.

The fight for equality and equal rights will be the hardest ever fought. We may not get a second chance. So we must consolidate our strength and aim our attacks where they will do the most damage. The root problem blocking the way of equal rights is a materialistic society which is based on the principle of "I" and "mine" and the illusion that "I am this body." Abortion is a result of The Man's frantic urge to keep his power base secure and to continue his decadent satisfaction of the demands of his insatiable senses. Instead of glossing over, why don't we try to solve this problem?

ABORTION

Beyond Mythology



T
This is a scene from the Bhagavad-gita. Arjuna, has just said to Krishna, "I wish to see how you have entered into this cosmic manifestation. If You think that I am able to behold Your cosmic form... then kindly show me that unlimited universal self." Arjuna knew he could not grab the Lord with his tiny imperfect senses. He honestly admits his limitations. If Krishna likes, He can reveal Himself by His grace.

H
Krishna said, "Whatever you wish to see, behold at once in this body of Mine! Everything - moving and nonmoving - is completely here, in one place." Then Arjuna was shown the universal form, which is what's going on in this painting. "If hundreds of thousands of suns were to rise at once into the sky, their radiance might resemble the effulgence of the Supreme Person in that universal form."

A
Fully shaken up, Arjuna said, "I see in you no end, no middle and no beginning... The sun and moon are Your eyes. I see You with blazing fire coming forth from Your mouth, burning the entire universe by Your own radiance. Although You are one, You are spread throughout the sky and the planets and all space between... As the many waves of the river flow into the ocean, so do all these great warriors enter blazing into Your mouths. I see all people rushing full speed into Your mouths, as moths dash to destruction in a blazing fire... Please tell me who You are... for I do not know what Your mission is."

T
Then came the famous answer: "Time I am, destroyer of worlds, and I have come to destroy all people."

Death

Atheism is very comfortable. You see, unlike our religious friends, we don't have to worry about God and all these rules and "sins" and stuff like that. We can make our own rules - and change them whenever we want. We can do what we like when we like, and we don't have to answer to anyone.

This is our gross misunderstanding: That our tiny denial of God erases Him from reality and exempts us from His laws of nature. I might be an "Anarchy in the UK" type and deny the government up and down until I'm blue in the face. Still, as soon as I hold up the liquor store, the cops will cart me away just like every other criminal. Although we may claim to be independent of the laws of God, like the punk in jail, we are nonetheless completely in their grip. The proof is the unavoidable fact that we will be forced to die.

We like to claim, "God is dead." Actually, for us atheists, "death is God." Maybe because we're so envious of Him, or maybe just because we've been cheated so many times by 'religion,' but somehow, we don't want a loving relationship with God; so we relate with Him in an unloving way. There's no chance of not having a relationship with God. The question is, do we want a loving relationship - or a cold, impersonal, and calculated one? The choice is *totally* ours.

Why does a kind and gentle God bother with such a fearsome feature? Well, actually God's form of death is another side of His kindness and unlimited mercy. By manifesting Himself as death, He gives us a chance to evolve our spiritual understanding. By studying the all-powerful nature of death, we can begin to understand that there *really* is a higher power; that there *are* things in the universe we have no control over. Learning this, we take a big step forward on the path back to reawakening our original loving relationship with God.

Once we know that there is a Supreme Power, even if we're so dull that the only way we see Him is in death, it is useless to go on denying. And once we've stopped denying, why experience Him only as death? That's not a very nice way to experience the potency of God. Why not try to find out about His lovable qualities? Death seems very powerful to us atheists, but it is such a tiny insignificant thing next to the Love power of Krishna.

One thing is certain, *we will* experience God. So why settle for such a negative experience - death? Why not try to experience God in full Love, as the supremely attractive source of all pleasure and beauty?

Trying to sell my zine has turned out to be an adventure. I've met a lot of strange characters and had a bunch of cool conversations. This is an excerpt from my diary of a trip to the Blast/ Haywire/ Amenity/ Inside Out/ Downcast show in Santa Barbara on 3/10/90.

First there was the kid I talked to while selling Amenity shirts. He came with some friends. I asked if they wanted to buy "my" zine. Was I a Krishna? he asked. One of his friends said something like, "Oh, I'm a Christian." I said, "So am I."

"You're a christian?"

Me: "Yeah."

Amenity shirt guy: "Oh, I thought you said *"Krishna"*..."

"Yeah I did."

"Wait, are you a Christian or a Krishna?"

"There are so many labels for the body. Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim... But the actual fact is that there is a person inside, beyond those labels."

"So you're a Krishna"

"Yeah. I try to be, to live up to it."

"Oh. Isn't Krishna an American religion? Didn't it start in West Virginia?"

"No. No. Krishna is an ancient religion."

"I thought it started like 14 years ago in West Virginia or something."

"No."

He liked the Universal Form picture... "This is cool. It's kinda like the Cro-Mags cover. Where do they get this from?"

"The *Bhagavad-gita*."

"*Bhagavad-gita*. That's pretty trippy. It's cool how the Razor's Edge explained the Cro-Mags cover."

Me: "Yeah."

"Where does that story come from?"

"Well it probably won't help much: it's from the *Srimad- Bhagavatam*. *Bhagavad-gita*, *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, these are all ancient books from India."

"Yeah, what is the *Bhagavad-gita* anyway?"

"Everybody's looking to find themselves. There's a true self deep inside, beneath all the labels. The *Bhagavad-gita* is about finding out who you really are, as a person, who the Supreme Person is, and what your relationship to that Supreme Person is."

"Wow. That's pretty cool."

Then there was another guy. The guy who's always up front singing. He was sitting with two friends. I went up to one and said, "Hey, you wanna buy my, quote unquote, "Krishna" zine?"

"Let me take a look at it."

Then the up-front-guy asked. "Are you guys Krishna's?"

"It depends what you mean. It's like if you ask, 'are you straightedge?' If to you someone is straight only if they wear x's on their hands, than the answer is no. You know what I mean? But Krishna is about living spiritually and finding out who you really are, and who God really is, and your relationship with Him. And that's a really big part of everyone in the band's life."

"But is it just a gimmick?"

"No. Being spiritual is not much of a gimmick anyway. It gets you a whole lot more bad press than good. If you are interested in an image or a gimmick, this is definitely not the right place."

"I don't know, I just wanted to be honest."

"Yeah. Honesty is everything. Without honest questions, you'll never get anywhere."

"Yeah. I smoke pot everyday. Well, I didn't today because I don't want to be all stoned out at a straightedge show and insult everybody. But I mean, I can't give it up."

"The principal is that you replace what you want to give up with something better. The you can give it up easily. Like these straightedge kids, they give up drugs and replaced it with the whole scene. So when you actually find out who you really are, that's so awesome that you can give up anything. Look at the devotees, they give up everything. They even give up sex. People are always blown away, 'How can you give up sex?' How do they do it?"

"I don't know."

"Because they've got something better. If you're leading a life where you're finding out who you really are, and who God is, that's so rad that you don't need any substitutes. That's how you can give up pot: get something higher."

I tried to sell a zine to this guy in a screwdriver shirt. He raised his eyes to look up at me, shaking his head very slowly. Finally he let out a low growl-like sound: "No."

Then there was that metal girl. "Hey, you wanna buy my zine."

"Let me see it first."

"Yeah check it out." I hand her one, and she breezes right through it. As usual the magazine naturally opens to the center page, where there is a picture of the Universal Form and an article called 'death'. She practically trips over her own two feet pushing the zine away from her in disgust.

ADVENTURES OF A ZINESTER

WHERE IS THAT THINKING?

A child is sent to school,
just to teach him how to think correctly.
Otherwise, he can think at home.
And this is thinking -
when you enquire, "why am I unhappy?"

I want to be happy,
but natures process is to obstruct me.
I want to live,
why by the laws of nature am I put to death?
This is thinking:
how to get out of it?

I don't want something,
but it is forced on me,
and why is it so?
When this inquiry comes,
that is real thinking,
but where is that thinking?

-Sri Prabhupada, 4/26/73,
morning walk

arranged by Satsvarupa das
Goswami



(cont. from p. 27)

Priest: Look at it this way. You just said a few minutes ago that there are eight million or so different kinds of life. Would you agree that the potato, the cabbage, and other vegetables also have life?

Sri Prabhupada: Yes.

Priest: So when you boil these vegetables, you're taking away their life.

Sri Prabhupada: What is your philosophy - that killing a potato and killing an innocent animal are equal?

Priest: Yes.

Sri Prabhupada: Then why don't you kill a child and eat it?

Priest: I wouldn't for a second think of killing a child.

Sri Prabhupada: But animals and children are alike in that they are both helpless and ignorant. Because a child is ignorant, that does not mean we can kill him. Similarly, although animals may be ignorant or unintelligent, we should not kill them unnecessarily. A reasonable man, a religious man, should discriminate. He should think, "If I can get my food from vegetables, fruits and milk, why should I kill and eat animals?" Besides, when you get a fruit from a tree, there is no killing. Similarly, when we take milk from the cow, we don't kill the cow. So, if we can live in such a way without killing, why should we kill animals?

Priest: Would you say that because I eat meat and bacon and so on - does that make me sinful? If I didn't eat those, I would be less sinful?

Sri Prabhupada: Yes. You would become purified.

Priest: That's very interesting.

Mike Robinson: Can you tell me what you believe to be the meaning of life? Why do we exist in the first place?

Sri Prabhupada: The meaning of life is to enjoy. But now you are on a false platform of life, and therefore you are suffering instead of enjoying. Everywhere we see the struggle for existence. Everyone is struggling, but what is their enjoyment in the end? They are simply suffering and dying. Therefore, although life means enjoyment, at the present moment your life is not enjoyment. But if you come to the real, spiritual platform of life, then you'll enjoy.

Adventures

"Oh no, I can't read that. I'm a Christian." [It's a *true* story!]
"So am I."
"You're a Christian?"
"Yes. Why not?"
"Oh, right. OK, forget it." She starts to walk away.
"What's the matter, what can't you read."
"You got stuff in there about death and all that."
"Actually that article is about how a kind, good God allows death..."
"OK, forget it."
"No really, it's about..."
"Forget it. I'm a Christian."

I'm thinking: for Christ's sake, so what? But I realize I'm not going to get through. "All right" I say, and slowly walk away.

"God bless you." She says. I'll take her blessing, I need all the help I can get. But the weird thing is, the whole time I was talking to her, I had to follow her around. She was practically running. She was like some caged mouse. She felt some emergency, some threat from my zine. That's a sign that I am doing something valuable. My zine should pose a threat to sectarian "better than you" forms of 'religion.' It should scare them, and back them into a corner. But to tell you the truth, I never expected a reaction like this. Instead of being bummed out by it, I'll take it as a sure sign that I haven't watered myself or my philosophies down by catering to the whims of people's changing opinions. And as a sign that I really need to sell more zines.



YOU ARE NOT THAT BODY

Not a very impressive room. I mean, I don't see why it couldn't just as well be someone's living room for that matter. I'll be the first to admit my disappointment. After all it's cracked up to be, I kinda expected something a little more heart breaking.

But here it is, a rectangle of dull gray. If I had to describe it... "Static" is a good word. "Unmoving." Stale, like hard old Doritos. I don't know, I'm sorry, I just wasn't very impressed.

They call this thing "a funeral." A whole bunch of people sit in one spot for hours, in a stale, static, unimpressive gray rectangular room; staring blankly at nauseous flower arrangements.

The widow would be at the front of the room, by the box. I didn't know if I should go say something, but I felt I must. It must be awful now that Bill had "gone on."

Her mouth hung mutely open; like a phone slightly off the hook. Working the clammy palm of her right with the thumb of her left, eyes fixed on the empty box - empty eyes/empty box. It fit.

What do you say to a person like that?

I suppose I managed to blubber and spittle something about being "sorry - what a shock that Bill has left us so unexpectedly." It's doubtful that she heard me anyway, the way she slowly nodded her head, disturbing neither stare nor ajar mouth.

And then there was the box.

I'd heard there would be a box here ("the widow'll be right in front of the box...") but I expected nothing like this long shiny... thing. In truth, I pictured a small cube, simulated wood grain, where you would put donations for the benefit of the newly deceased or something along those lines. This monstrosity was more like a torpedo.

At uncertain intervals they slowly get out of their plastic chairs, nursing crackling backs, fine tuning careful solemnity. A redundant pilgrimage to the box. Amid sniffles and handkerchiefs, kneeing before the box, moving their hands in silent confusion. Donation?

Another sickly set of flowers came in and threw up on the low shag rug.

Doing my part and trudging slowly up to the box. Looking down. Concentration on the contents of my pockets. He caught me so totally off guard, I thought my adam's apple would explode. Standing there with my shoulders hunched up like some scary halloween cat. Unable to take another step.

There he was - Hair follicle for hair follicle, corpuscle for corpuscle, DNA for DNA, Gene for Gene - there he was, Bill.

"Ah ...Um ...H- hey, Mrs. (Ms.?) Stone, you gotta see this..."

She stared with one of those faces I could never really describe - a mix of surprise, disgust, insult, disbelief... and hope.

"Bill... He's here! It's alright, he hasn't gone anywhere... Take a look in this box!"

Her expression melted into some new unrecordable emotion. Not exactly a banshee nor a dying seal, "Oooooaaaooh! Bill's gone, gone, he's gone forever..."

"No, hey, don't cry. Take a look, Bill's been lying in this box the whole time... right here! He's not gone..."

Intensified "Naaaaoooo! What are you trying to do? He's left us forever... gone forever."

Two gray suits got up, dusty. Boys in their early twenties. Sons, I suppose.

Escorted out.

"What is this, some kind of *joke*?" The zits on their angry faces stood out like potatoes at attention.

"I doubt it. I mean, I've always known Bill to have a rather strange sense of humor, but this is way out of character..."

"I'm talking about *you*" Red face. "What are you, from some other planet? Can't you understand?! That's not Bill, *Bill's dead and gone!*"

So now I sit before the typewriter. It's cold keys force wonder; There he was, right there in his box. But she persisted, "naaaooo, he's gone."

Flowered wallpaper stares back calmly, dutifully. Does she know? Has she known all along? "Bill's gone." But he was right there, I swear I saw him. Still, "Gone forever..."

Have they known all along? Is it all just conveniently "forgotten" for the want of sweet fantasy?

He lay there, but he was not there?

...Who are we??

At a funeral everyone seems to know - You're not that body. It's not hard to understand. "He passed on." Who passed on? The body's right there. Yet we seem to know, for that short time - the person is distinct from the body.

The truth of the matter is, the entire body is there, with all it's heredity, all it's environmental conditioning, all it's ethnic background, simply lying quietly and slowly decaying. Still, we know, "Bill's dead." How is this possible? This is a question which modern science must be confronted with.

Bill's body was there in its entirety, but there was no life, there was no Bill. So if Bill is nothing but a bag of chemicals,

(Continued on p. 45)

Vegetarianism

"I just don't understand it. How on earth could you possibly go without meat? What do you eat anyway? Too much trouble."

Yeah, I've heard it plenty of times. "No offense but, you're weird." Either that or they flatter me with being so "strong willed" to go through so much inconvenience just because of my "beliefs." Vegetarianism, after all, is such a hassle.

At the risk of blowing my reputation in certain circles, I'm not some kind of strong willed monk or something. Vegetarianism is not a hassle. As a matter of fact, it's not being a vegetarian that's a pain. "too much trouble". Meat eating is, after all, such a sacrifice.

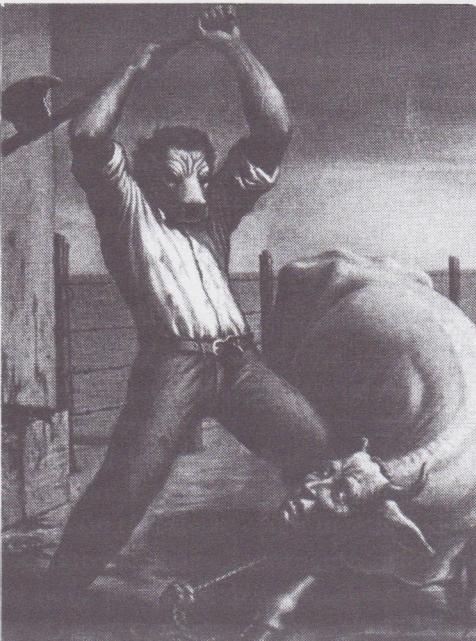
Economics

Meat eating is just about the most expensive legal habit you can have. It's way to much of a bummer for me to drive to the store and shell out all that cash for this one little piece of cow corpse. I'll let you in on a secret. I went to Alpha Beta the other day and bought a potato for 20 cents. I made a huge dinner that night for about \$1.50. There's all kinds of deals like that. It blew me away how expensive it is to eat meat. You don't need me to tell you - go to the supermarket and act like a "smart shopper."

Health

As far as health goes, I don't understand how non-vegetarians do it. With all the hype on cholesterol and that stuff, it's no secret that meat is a time bomb, yet they continue to eat! What penance! What selfless denial just because of their beliefs. I myself am not exactly into all that austerity. I'd rather just relax and eat foods that my body can handle - call me lazy. All right, if I was a dog or some other carnivorous animal, things might be different. Those bodies can somehow metabolize an

almost endless amount of excess animal fat without a problem. But seeing as I'm not walking around on four legs... Our bodies can't handle all that gunk fat in animal flesh, we get all these annoying cholesterol problems. Human intestines are about 9 times too long for meat. Meat decomposes so much faster than plants, and for that reason, the intestines of carnivorous species are only 3 times their body length - so they can get it out quickly. But our intestines are 12 times the length of our bodies,



and on that long trip to the toilet bowl meat putrefies and produces toxins. To tell you the truth, colon cancer doesn't appeal to me at the moment.

Our body has to deal with those toxins somehow, so the kidneys start working overtime. Even if I was going to eat meat only occasionally, my kidneys would have to work 3 times harder than a vegetarian's. I've seen enough old people to know that kidneys are not something you want to be fooling around with, I'm just not into spending my old age on a journey between hospital beds.

Forget about the kidney, what about

the heart? I'll tell you, I'd have to be crazy to put some of the junk they're selling out there into my stomach. As early as 1961, the Journal of the American Medical Association stated that 90-97% of heart disease, the cause of more than 1/2 of the deaths in the United States, could be prevented by a vegetarian diet.

And cancer... I think you get the picture. A vegetarian does sometimes feel a little left out with so many people sacrificing their health and life for a wasteful system of callous decadence. But I think I'll grin and bear it.

Sociologically

Call me weird, but it's kind of a lame feeling to know that I'm actively endorsing the brutal gang rape of the planet and her inhabitants. I mean, for me, it's just too much of a pain to know that I'm eating the product of the most grossly wasteful system of agriculture the world has ever known.

Here's an example of what I'm talking about: an acre of spinach will produce 28 times more protein than an acre of pasture set aside for meat production. People are already shaking in their boots about overpopulation and mass starvation. We're beginning to hear that the earth cannot support her growing population. But the fact is that if the earth's arable land were used primarily for the production of vegetarian foods, the planet could easily support a population of 20 billion or more. Read that again and think about it. Now ponder this quote from agricultural economist Rene Dumont: "The overconsumption of meat by the rich means hunger for the poor." I'm not pretending that simply by becoming vegetarian I'll somehow supply starving Ethiopia with three meals a day, but problems are solved one step at a time, and vegetarianism is a big step. Maybe

I can't singlehandedly solve the problem, but at least I won't be counted among those who create and maintain the hunger of the poor.

Meat eating just makes no sense. It destroys the world in no time flat. If you want to be a part of that, well I guess you'll have to deal with that yourself. For me it's way too much trouble.

Everybody loves the Greeks so let me quote something from Plato's Republic; Socrates warned that if people began eating animals, there would be need for more pasturing land, "And the country which was enough to support the original inhabitants will be too small now, and not enough?" he asked of Glaucon, who replied that this was indeed true. "And so we shall go to war, Glaucon, shall we not?" To which Glaucon replied, "Most certainly."

War? I'll pass thank you.

Ethics

I know it - people are not exactly interested in ethics. But I'll write about them anyway. As a meat eater, I couldn't help feeling like a hypocrite. Worrying about war & hunger, and engaging in violent mass murder and monstrous waste. I just couldn't seem to make it fit. How is it that I could claim killing is bad - moan and groan about it, fear it as I walked down the street - and yet make not the slightest effort to reduce it?

The fact is that you cannot live without killing. Every time you breath, millions of micro-organisms die. And yes, killing vegetables is also killing. But this concept cannot be used to justify indiscriminate slaughter of anything and everything. It's good for people to understand that vegetables are also living entities and we should be kind to them. But the philosophy that "vegetarians kill vegetables so it's alright to kill animals" is completely irrational. Why draw the line there? With this philosophy what's wrong with killing humans? (look at the newspapers, not much) Hey they're all gonna die anyway, no one will mind if I slip into the "The maternity ward with an uzi... I'll just explain my philosophy...

You'll always have to kill something,

overconsumption of meat by the rich means hunger for the poor."

-from a report submitted to the United Nations World Food Conference by René Dumont, an agricultural economist at the French National Agricultural Institute



whether a human or a bacterium, that is the law of the material world. The point is to kill as little as possible. As far as killing vegetables goes, far less vegetables are killed with a vegetarian diet. This is because less plants will feed more people if the plants are eaten directly, instead of being fed first to an animal and then eaten. Vegetarianism puts animal slaughter completely out of the picture and greatly reduces the amount of vegetation which must be killed to get good nutrition. Violence is reduced on all sides.

Just as we are struggling to keep our heads above water in this turbulent material ocean, so are all species fighting for survival. We are in the same boat. Compassion is righteous, no matter how you slice it, so please consider whether you can help our partners in their struggle for survival.

Vegetarianism is not just an animal rights thing. It is also a kindness towards humans, towards the earth, and towards your self. Please please give it all honest consideration and don't hesitate to do the needful. Thanks.

THE HIGHER TASTE

A Guide to Gourmet Vegetarian Cooking and a Karma-Free Diet

Features dozens of delicious, healthy, easy-to-prepare recipes. Also explains medical, economic, ethical, and spiritual reasons for becoming a vegetarian. 176 pages with many illustrations. Send \$1 for postage to: 17763 Bellechase Circle, San Diego CA 92128.



Cover Story

"What's that Best Wishes album cover all about? I mean, I thought the Hare Krishnas went for peace and vegetarianism and all that stuff..."

OK, here's the deal: The guy getting tweaked is called Hiranyakasipu, (say that 10 times fast) a powerful atheist who was madly in love with wealth, power and sense gratification. He had big plans, none of which included death. Death would mean his power trip would have to end, that just wouldn't do.

So Hiranyakasipu started practicing all kinds of weird yogas and that sort of thing until eventually he was causing such a disturbance that the head of the universe, Brahma, came to pacify him, to give him whatever it was he wanted.

Hiranyakasipu eagerly asked for immortality. But this Brahma could not give, because he does not have it. Brahma is the most powerful embodied being in the universe, but he's still in a material body. He still must die. No matter how big someone gets, no matter how many PHD's and multimillion dollar jackpots, they must die - No different than an ant in the dirt.

But, after all the trouble he'd been through, Hiranyakasipu wasn't exactly giving up. After much wheeling and dealing, he finally received the benediction that he could not be killed with any weapon, indoors or outdoors, in the daytime or at night; on the land or in the air, or by any beast or human being, living or nonliving.

Thinking himself as good as immortal, Hiranyakasipu, psyched, set out conquering the universe with savage determination. And who could

stop him? He defeated everyone, and forced them to bow down and worship him. His rule was more oppressive than history has ever known. People lived in constant fear of this unstoppable tyrant. Helpless, they prayed to the Supreme Lord for relief.

During all this conquering, Hiranyakasipu had four sons. The most glorious being the fourth, a boy named Prahlad. When Prahlad was still



in the womb of his mother, he heard a great sage speaking the science of Krishna consciousness and even from birth he was a spotlessly pure devotee of Lord Krishna. Prahlad was as wonderful as his father was horrible.

At first, Hiranyakasipu was very fond of his son. But when he learned that Prahlad was instructing his schoolmates on devotional service to Krishna, he wasn't exactly thrilled. He had sent Prahlad to the finest materialistic school, taught only the best methods of money making and sense gratifying. He would sit Prahlad on his lap and ask what he was

learning. Prahlad would tell him honestly that he was learning how bogus money making, sense gratification and the rest of the material world was. Needless to say, Hiranyakasipu was not jumping for joy. In fact, he ordered his son to be killed.

But this order proved exceedingly difficult to execute. Prahlad was thrown beneath the feet of elephants, off the top of a mountain, attacked him with twisted weapons, tortured and poisoned. But He remained without a scratch. He simply meditated on Lord Krishna, who kept him from any harm.

This news inflamed the already irate Hiranyakasipu, and confused him to no end. I mean, he tweaked entire planets with no problem, and now he couldn't finish off this one little kid. Who could be supplying the child with such strength? Who could be more powerful than himself? He decided to kill Prahlad with his own hands.

Prahlad simply stood, humble and quiet, while his enraged father ranted and raved. When Hiranyakasipu demanded to know where Prahlad was getting his strength, the child replied that he and his father were both getting their strength from the same source: The Supreme Lord, Krishna.

"My dear father," Prahlad advised, "please give up your demoniac mentality. Do not discriminate in your heart between enemies and friends; make your mind equipoised towards everyone. Except for the uncontrolled and misguided mind, there is no enemy in this world. When one sees everyone on the platform of equality one comes to the platform of

worshiping God perfectly."

But this thoughtful philosophy only made Hiranyakasipu more venomous. Red with anger and ranting like a lunatic, he demanded to see this Supreme Being

Prahlad was talking about.

"But where is He?" He raged. "If He is everywhere, then why is he not present before me in this pillar? Because you are speaking so much nonsense I shall now sever your head from your body. Let me see your most worshipable God come to protect you. I want to see it."

Then the tyrant struck a marble pillar with his fist. A terrible noise emanated from deep within and the whole universe became fearful. As the pillar blew apart with incredible force, the entire assembly hall became filled with the immense divine form of Lord Nrisimha (the lion-man on the album cover).

After having witnessed Hiranyakasipu's cruelty toward Prahlad, Lord Nrisinga was totally infuriated. But Hiranyakasipu was so puffed up from his powerful position that he thought he could defeat Lord Nrisinga just like all the others he had conquered on his rise to power. Just to enjoy the play, Lord Nrisinga

allowed him the honor of extended combat. Although Hiranyakasipu

weapon, but with the nails of Lord Nrisinga. Although Krishna is never bound to keep anyone's promises, He still honored the benedictions of Brahma because Brahma is His devotee, and Krishna goes to great lengths to honor His devotees.

After Hiranyakasipu was thoroughly dead and twisted, Nrisinga continued to roar and rage, terrifying everyone. Everyone, that is, except Prahlad, who simply saw fearsome Nrisinga as his worshipable Lord, and eagerly approached Him with a garland of flowers.

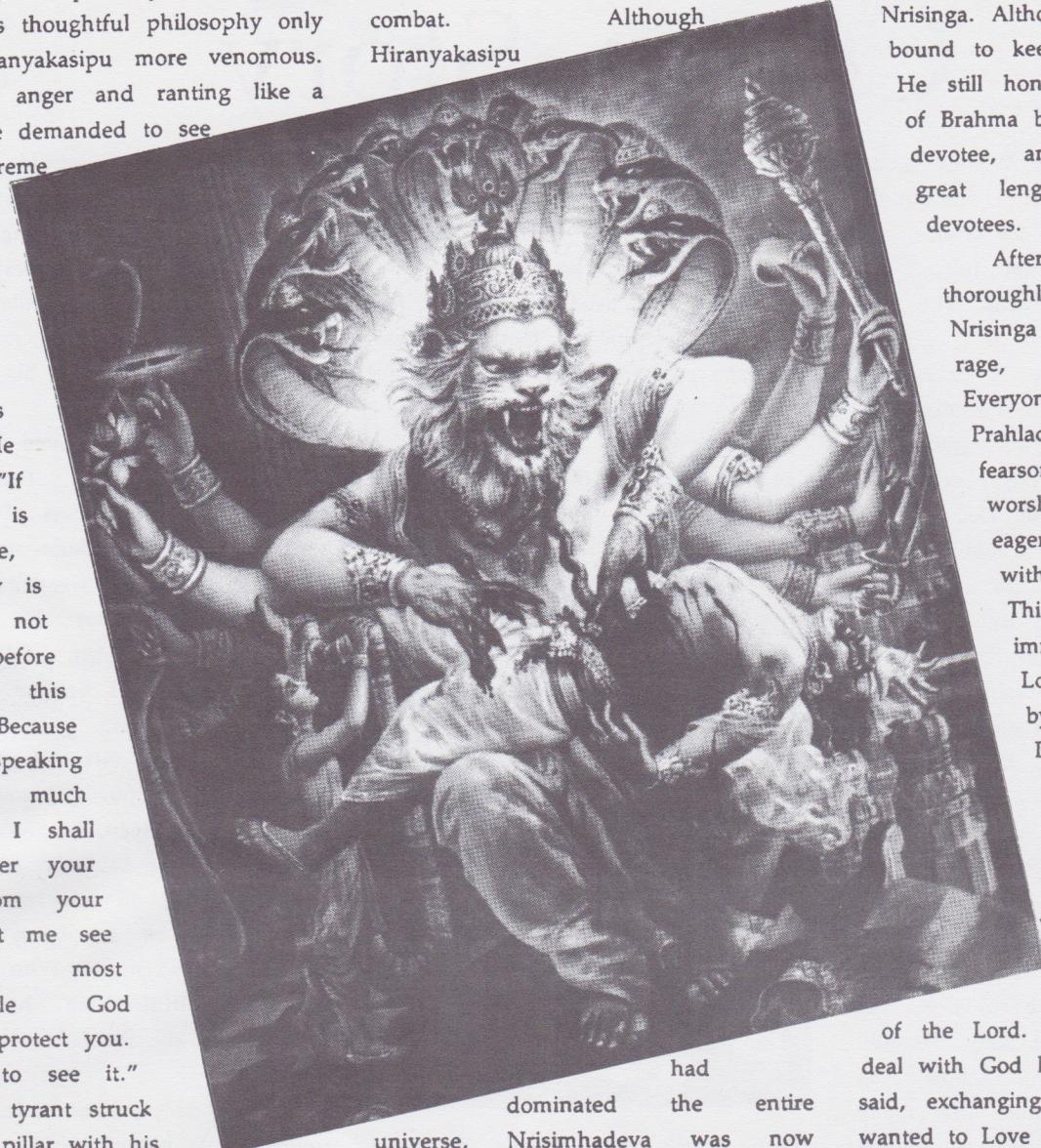
This display of Love immediately pacified the Lord. Deeply pleased by the sincerity of Prahlad, Lord Nrisimhadeva offered to give him whatever he wanted.

Prahlad said that he wanted nothing. He was satisfied with his adoration

of the Lord. He did not want to deal with God like a businessman, he said, exchanging this for that, he just wanted to Love and serve Him.

But Nrisimha insisted. Out of compassion, Prahlad thought of the welfare of his father and he asked Lord Nrisimha to please liberate Hiranyakasipu from the torment of his demoniac desires.

Nrisimha assured him, "My dear Prahlad, because you were born in this family your father has been purified along with twenty-one forefathers in your family. Whenever and wherever there are peaceful, equiposed devotees who are well-behaved and decorated with all good qualities, that place and the dynasties there, even if condemned, are purified."



had dominated the entire universe, Nrisimhadeva was now playing with him like a toy. He lifted Hiranyakasipu onto His lap and, ripping open his abdomen with His nails, disemboweled the demoniac king.

Lord Nrisingadeva killed Hiranyakasipu in such a way that all the promises of Lord Brahma were fulfilled. He was killed not by a human being or beast, but by the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself, in a half-lion, half-man form. Hiranyakasipu was killed on Nrisinga's lap - not on the land or in the sky; in the doorway - neither outdoors nor indoors; and at twilight - neither day or night. He was killed with no

Cro-Mags cover story

Lord Nrisimha is one of the most beloved appearances of Krishna. His special pastime is to protect all souls that look Him as their only shelter. Those who are determined to make a change in this corrupt materialistic society by constantly engaging in spiritual welfare work for the benefit

of all living entities always have the protection of Lord Nrisimha. Therefore, although there are thousands of small time Hiranyakasipu's scattered here and there, we won't be broken. The terrible rage of Lord Nrisimhadeva protects us from the schemes and dreams of the numberless

Hiranyakasipu's who seek to silence us. As long as our most sincere desire is to serve the Lord, there is nothing that can stop us from bringing about a peaceful change in the world, by distributing spiritual knowledge and true Love of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. So we pray for that sincerity, and write on...

Spiritual Life: a cop out? (continued from page 10)

now when something heavy happens, turn on the TV and watch Robin Hood. Or get up on stage and play 'Robin Hood of Hardcore.'"

"So when something I don't like happens I should go do some ritual or read some bible or whatever book you use?"

"No. That's also a cop out. Simply blindly following rituals and repeating words like a parrot - that's not spiritual life. That's some kind of screwed up thing people call 'religion.' But just because there's some rascals blinding themselves and calling it religion, don't think that has anything to do with true spiritual life. Don't get cheated like that."

"Well then what is true spiritual life?"

"Spiritual life means living the questions - Why am I here? Who am I? What is the purpose of living? Is there a purpose? Is there a God? What is this God? Who is this God? Spiritual life means living the question - why am I

gonna die? I don't want to die, but I have to, why? Spiritual life means honesty. If there is no honesty, there is no spiritual life and everything is a cop out. The so-called rituals are there, if you're interested, to help you. Not to be followed like some stupid insect, but to be investigated with every ounce of intelligence. The books are there, to be studied carefully and applied - not to be recited like some tape recorder. You will wind up blind if you blindly follow anything - religion, science, whatever. And so these fools who call themselves religionists, they've ruined everything. Now we are repulsed by the slightest mention of religion. But true spiritual life is always available to the honest and sincere. It is imperishable. It's there - if you really do want to stop coping out."

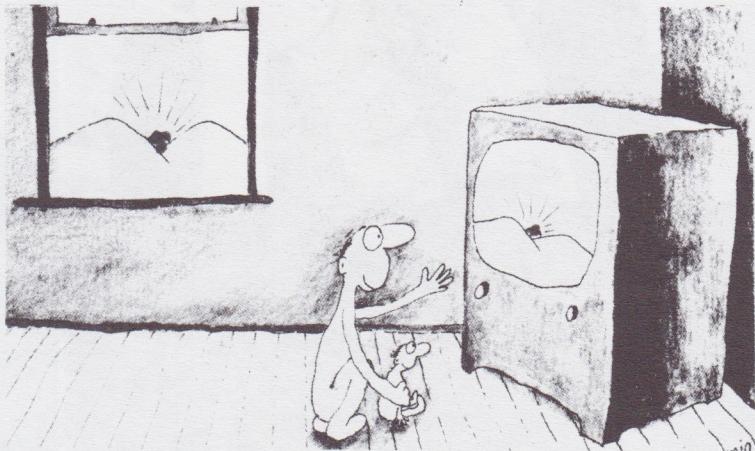
"Ok ok, I'll take your damn zine already. How much?"

You are not that body (Continued from page 39)

please, bring him back from the dead. We have all the chemicals at our ready disposal. We have such detailed knowledge of chemistry. So why not simply rearrange the chemicals and make Bill get out of that box and dance down the isle? That we cannot do. Despite all our attempts, Bill's dead and gone.

But spiritual science reminds us that we are not the body. We are irreducible elements of consciousness, foreign to material nature. We are atomic sparks of awareness transcendental to this decaying flesh and blood. When we identify ourselves as different bodies and groups of bodies (Black/white, man/woman, this/that) we become subject to exploitation, oppression, and everything else you can name.

When the gross physical body appears alive, the soul is present; when it is dead, the soul has left. Otherwise, what is the difference between a live body and dead body? Anyone can understand.



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Send in any questions you have about the whole Hare Krishna thing. I'll try to answer them in future issues of this column.

Who started it?

That's not such an easy question to answer. The puranas (history books) document practice of the basic tenants of Krishna consciousness throughout history.

This is because the essential philosophy of Krishna consciousness is not a cultural phenomena pertaining to various physical and historical circumstances. Rather, it is an eternal companion of the living entity.

This essential philosophy is summed up in the phrase: "Pure devotion to God" (which means desiring to please Him with no motive for personal gain). But the various expressions of this eternal force can be seen in historical context...

The biggest event happened when Srila Prabhupada crossed the ocean and established the practice of Krishna consciousness throughout the world. The first western temple started on the lower east side, New York, in mid 1966.

Krishna consciousness did not start in 1966. It was brought from one place to another, by Srila Prabhupada.

Why do they always say 'Hare Krishna'?

Chanting Hare Krishna is a method for reviving one's personal relationship with God. The philosophy goes very deep, explaining how God and His names are not different. By hearing His names, devotees come to realize they are actually with God.

Actually this process is recommended in many different religious scriptures. Throughout the world. The Bible has nearly a hundred verses which praise the power of God's hallowed name. Taking shelter of the names of God is in no way "foreign" or "eastern" it is universal among religious traditions.

What about women?

The philosophy is that regardless of bodily condition, black- white, man-woman, green, purple or orange, everyone is a part and parcel of God.

Whatever discrepancies have snuck into the Hare Krishna movement in regards to

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women are mistakes. Devotees will admit that there have been mistakes, and currently there is a big reform program going on to insure that the movement is not deviating from the philosophy and teachings presented by Srila Prabhupada.

Women and men have the same basic roles in Krishna consciousness. Being a teacher, or a speaker, or a monk, or a priest, or whatever, is open to anyone who feels comfortable with that position. There are female priests, teachers, renunciates, farmers, career workers. There are male cooks, janitors...

Although it is a difficult thing to do successfully, the Hare Krishna's are sincerely trying to offer everyone a chance to serve Krishna in the way they are best inclined, regardless of their material situation (rich/poor, man/woman, black/white, Christian/Hindu...)

What are they trying to do?

The Hare Krishna movement tries to bring about a peaceful world-wide society based on self-realization and awareness of God.

Do you have to live in a temple?

No. Krishna consciousness is not a certain building. Krishna consciousness is a personal thing, something within your self. In fact most devotees live outside the temple. Temple life, however is very helpful for the beginner to develop their spiritual understanding. But it is not necessary.

It's not the four walls of the temple, but the devotees inside that count. The temple is a place where people can question advanced devotees and deepen their own understanding of Krishna consciousness; Sing and dance in worship of God; taste prasadam, etc. It is a place where spiritual realizations are shared and determination in the fight against materialism is renewed.

Devotees say that the best thing is not to hide away from the world, but to go out into it and try to boldly spread knowledge of God.

A Fad?

I hope you're not getting sick of my stories - Because there's This One Guy who I hadn't seen in a couple of months. And now we were all together in the chilly parking lot of the country club, over by the big garbage can next to the side walk, huddled around the back of someone's pickup.

As usual we were talking nonsense just to pass the time, when the conversation turned to Ray's new band: Shelter. For whatever reason, one kid needed to add that some singer from the east coast was a Hare Krishna. That's when This One Guy spit out his little gem: "God... Krishna is such a fad!"

Obviously, he didn't know that I was into this stuff. Because his mouth fully dropped when he found out that he had said "Krishna is a fad" straight to my face. I pointed at him with my best Run DMC impression, and gave it all I had. "Krishna's a fad? So what? Is that all you can say? 'It's a fad.' Does that mean you're off the hook? Does that mean that now you don't have to find out what it's really about? Yes, by all means, label it 'a fad,' 'stupid,' 'dumb,' this way you won't have to pay attention when I totally blow away your whole lifestyle and all your foolish, shallow philosophies."

Wow. It seemed like the whole parking lot disappeared, and it was just me and This One Guy, and a few silent faces. He was way too stunned, and I didn't expect him to say anything anyway, so I went on, getting more and more into the body English. "Keep yourself very busy tagging everyone as fads. Cause if

there's any spare time, you might have to look in the mirror and see your own hollow eyes. Because, when you get right down to it, isn't your whole life a fad? Isn't your entire life just a meaningless trend?"

He cleared his throat, "no."

"No! Come on! Stop sticking your nose into everybody else's faults for a little while, and look at your cute hairdo; look at your clothes; look at your fancy little high top Nikes. Actually, your very existence is faddish. But that doesn't matter. It really doesn't matter. I mean, you still have your moments. You do cool things. I think you're an OK guy. But still you're a complete fad... How's it possible that some people think you're a fad, and yet you're still kind of a cool kid?"

The world was still, stopped and silent. A few more faces made guest appearances in the corner of my eye. This One Guy just stared at me, "what are you trying to say?"

"I'm saying: look, when you don't know anything about something, you can always just label it a fad, fold it up neatly, put it on the shelf, and forget about it. That's what people do with straightedge. Aren't you into straightedge? You see what I'm saying? Straightedge: people consider it a fad - and it is. So what? So straightedge is a fad, that has nothing to do with the fact that drinking is a waste. That has nothing to do with what straightedge is really about. Just because a whole bunch of kids are into straightedge as a fad, so? You're straightedge. You obviously

think there's something there that's worth all the time and energy you put into your band and your life. See what I'm saying? Just because it's a fad for some people, that doesn't affect what it's really about. Right? Does it?"

He was looking at me very intently, arms folded across his chest. All his weight was on the left foot as he nodded his head up and down - Obviously absorbed in deep yogic meditation or something.

I went on, adding new hand gestures, "Because everything is a fad to somebody? Pick anything, surfing, playing guitar, cooking toasted ginger molasses, anything. There's always someone who's into it as a fad. They get into nuclear physics because their friends are, and they're out of it in a week. Does that affect the actual validity of nuclear physics? Of course not. So you can take anything and say it's a fad. And it really is, to someone. And on the other hand, there's some guy somewhere who really is into collecting hula hoops, and for him it's not a fad. Saying something is or isn't a fad says absolutely nothing about the thing itself."

He squinted and shifted feet.

"So what do you think, is that reasonable? Everything is a fad and everything isn't a fad. So why waste so much breath barking, 'fad! fad!' What's the purpose?"

Another quick foot shift. "I don't know, it just seems like kids are getting into Krishna because Ray is, or because it's the cool thing to do, or they want

Saying something is or isn't a fad says nothing about the actual thing itself. It says something about a bunch of saps who'll be into it today and into something else tomorrow, but it says nothing about actual Krishna consciousness

to be like Harley or something."

"Yeah, I'm sure there are kids like that. I know there are. They're into it one minute, out the next; and left with a whole bunch of neck beads and books they'll never read. But what I'm saying is: So what? Because there are a lot of kids who are totally sincere. You see?

"So maybe Krishna is a fad for a lot of people. Now what? What else can you say about Krishna consciousness? Because if all you know is 'it's a fad' then you know absolutely nothing about the actual thing itself: Krishna consciousness. You may know something about a bunch of saps who'll be into it today and into something else tomorrow, but you know nothing about actual Krishna consciousness.

"But that's what we want to do, isn't it? We want to defeat Krishna so that we don't have to change our lifestyle. And it's easy to defeat a bunch of enthusiastic little straightedge kids who idolize Ray Cappo. But defeating the ancient spiritual knowledge of the timeless Vedas - that's another story; we know we can't do that. So what do we do? Run away from it. Run away from what Krishna consciousness really is. Run away from the real philosophy and chant like a lunatic: 'fad, fad, fad.'

"Some of these kids who think they're into Hare Krishna... The fad kids, I apologize for them. They're very foolish. But the people who really are into it, who are solid and sincere and

honest (and there are quite a few) these are the people you want to talk to. These are the people you want to stand right in front of and tell it straight to their faces - and see if they don't clear things up for you. They will.

"I mean look, if you just don't like the Hare Krishnas, what can I do about that? But please be honest and say, "I just don't like them, I have no real reason." Don't try to search for all these pseudoreasonings and nonsense; 'it's a fad.' ...So, what do you think?"

He nodded his head for a little while, arms still folded, "Yeah, all right. I'll buy that."

Everybody laughed nervously and the parking lot resumed its normal routine. Almost.

It's easy to defeat a bunch of enthusiastic little straightedge kids who idolize ray cappo. But defeating the ancient spiritual knowledge of the timeless Vedas - that's another story; So what do we do? Run away from the real philosophy and chant like a lunatic: 'fad! fad! fad!'

Mike Forced Down, (cont. from p. 20)

whatever, for whatever reasons. Cause everyone's searching. It's hard for me to deem, because there's so many people that really believe they're right. And that's the one thing I try to do... Examine all spiritual things and never close myself off. Maybe people turn themselves off to... I don't know, Buddhism, say "Ah, da da da." I don't know, I don't wanna close my self off. Krishna... You know, people close themselves off to this stuff. I don't see where it's good to close off to anything. Take something in. You don't have to say "Oh wow, look what I found, look what I am." Just take it. Life is so serious, man. We're so blinded, man. People go home, they turn on the TVs. What do you see? You see nothing, man. And you're not gonna remember anything about life. Who owns those TVs? Whose putting out those shows?

Why are they doing it? It's all to sell, man. It's all business. It's all made to sell. And when I see all this stuff that's made to sell I don't see truth and knowledge... It's McDonalds, man. It's quotas. It's

sell this many Big macs. Cut down this much rain forest and we'll make this much money. That's when you lose all the meaning, all the purpose, all truth behind something.

So definitely I see some spiritual stuff, especially in this world, in our society, as redeeming. A lot of times I just wanna bail. I just wanna go to the mountains. Escape from what I see, but one thing I try to deal with is that sometimes going to the mountains isn't the thing. If you find peace you can be peaceful anywhere. Some very powerful people found peace in the middle of revolutions, man. And changed a lot of things.

But I definitely have spiritual reconciliation upon my life. Whether other people should have it or not, I don't know. If I knew I'd say. What I feel I try to express and extend to other people. It rolls

back to the spirituality. I'm trying to express a spiritual... kinda to "enlighten" (would that be the word?) kinda to enlighten, you know? Whether people do or don't I don't know, but Yeah, I do.



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